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THE END OF AN ERA

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Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel

[Photo by Margaret Bourke-White — Courtesy : TIME, Inc.]

THE END OF AN ERA

HYDERABAD MEMORIES

K. M. MUNSHI



BHARATIYA VIDYA BHAVAN

BOMBAY

1957

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CONTENTS

CHAPTER	PAGE
PREFACE - - - - -	IX
INTRODUCTION - - - - -	XI
I MY ARRIVAL IN HYDERABAD - - - - -	1
II HIS EXALTED HIGHNESS - - - - -	11
III TOWARDS A MUSLIM STATE - - - - -	19
IV BID FOR INDEPENDENCE - - - - -	30
V THE RISE OF KASIM RAZVI - - - - -	36
VI SARDAR'S CHESS BOARD - - - - -	42
VII THE CHHATARI DELEGATION - - - - -	51
VIII RAZVI WINS - - - - -	57
IX THE LAIK ALI MINISTRY - - - - -	67
X THE SITUATION AS I FOUND IT - - - - -	73
XI NEGOTIATION : FIRST STAGE - - - - -	78
XII THE COMMUNISTS ON THE MOVE - - - - -	86
XIII BREAKING THE RING FENCE - - - - -	93
XIV THE GREAT MARTYRDOM - - - - -	103
XV TEMPO OF THE RAZAKARS - - - - -	110
XVI MY LIFE AT BOLARUM - - - - -	116
XVII PERSONA NON-GRATA - - - - -	121
XVIII BETWEEN THE DEVIL— - - - -	127
XIX —AND THE DEEP SEA - - - - -	133

CHAPTER	PAGE
XX THE MYSTERY SPEECH OF RAZVI - - -	139
XXI MONCKTON'S FORMULA AND ITS FATE - -	146
XXII PANDITJI SPEAKS - - - - -	151
XXIII CAMPBELL-JOHNSON PAYS A VISIT - -	157
XXIV MORE CONCESSIONS - - - - -	165
XXV LORD MOUNTBATTEN LEAVES INDIA - -	173
XXVI DEMORALISATION - - - - -	181
XXVII CRISIS IN THE KING KOTHI - - -	188
XXVIII DEMORALISATION IN OUR CAMP - - -	195
XXIX AS THE NET CLOSES - - - - -	203
XXX THE STEN-GUN INCIDENT - - - - -	217
XXXI THE COLLAPSE - - - - -	225
XXXII HOW THE COUNTRY TOOK IT - - - - -	235
XXXIII THE END OF THE ADVENTURE - - - -	243
XXXIV STRANGE CASUALTIES - - - - -	247
XXXV EPILOGUE—THE END OF AN ERA - - -	254
APPENDICES - - - - -	263
INDEX - - - - -	283

ILLUSTRATIONS

Frontispiece

SARDAR VALLABHBHAI PATEL

Between pages 32 and 33

1. LORD MOUNTBATTEN
2. PANDIT JAWAHARLAL NEHRU

Between pages 64 and 65

3. THE NIZAM
4. MIR LAIK ALI

Between pages 96 and 97

5. THE AUTHOR'S ARRIVAL AT HAKIMPETH AIRPORT ON JANUARY 5, 1948
6. THE AUTHOR AND HIS STAFF IN THE LAWNS OF *Dakshina Sadan*
7. FLAG SALUTATION AT BOLARUM RESIDENCY
8. THE AUTHOR SPEAKING AT THE CITIZENS RECEPTION IN HIS HONOUR AT SECUNDERABAD RACE COURSE, SWAMI RAMANANDA TIRTHA PRESIDING

Between pages 160 and 161

9. NAWAB MOIN NAWAZ JUNG, THE AUTHOR AND MIR LAIK ALI AT A GARDEN PARTY
10. SRI N. T. RAJU, SRI PINGLE VENKATRAMA REDDI, MIR LAIK ALI, THE AUTHOR, NAWAB MOIN NAWAZ JUNG, NAWAB ALI YAVAR JUNG, NAWAB DEEN YAR JUNG AND SRI J. V. JOSHI
11. KASIM RAZVI

Between pages 245 and 246

12. MAJOR-GENERAL CHAUDHURY, THE AUTHOR AND SWAMI RAMANANDA TIRTHA
13. THE AUTHOR BEING CARRIED FROM THE AEROPLANE ON A STRETCHER AT SANTA CRUZ AIRPORT ON SEPTEMBER 22, 1948

PREFACE

THIS work deals with my experiences between January 5 and September 21, 1948, when I was the Agent-General of the Government of India in Hyderabad.

I am in the habit of preserving correspondence, papers, notes and what I call 'diary note', that is, irregularly and hastily recorded impressions of talks, incidents and reflections on events as they occur. I felt that this material, together with further impressions of the events which have been left on my mind, deserves to be put into shape. Almost all important documents and reports of the happenings relating to the negotiations with the Nizam of Hyderabad in 1947-48 and the Police Action, which followed in September 1948, have been published from time to time. The Government of India and the Nizam's Government published White Papers in 1948. In addition, documents, press notes, speeches and interviews connected with most of the incidents appeared in the press at the time. Several notable persons connected with the affair have since recorded their impressions in works already published. Sri V. P. Menon, in his recently published book *The Story of the Integration of the Indian States*, has drawn largely upon sources, some of which I have also used. I have thus been able to recall my own experiences with some degree of vividness.

In places the narrative may appear egotistic. If so, I beg to be excused. I can define the reasons for this in no better language than that used by Somerset Maugham in *The Partial View*:

I must write as though I were a person of importance, and indeed I am—to myself. To myself I am the most important person in the world; though I do not forget that, not even taking into consideration so grand a conception as the Absolute, but from the standpoint of commonsense, I am of no consequence whatever. It would have made small difference to the universe if I had never existed. Though I may seem to write as though significance must necessarily be attached to certain of my works, I mean only that they are of moment to me for the purpose of any discussion during which I may have occasion to mention them.

In recreating the incidents of this tumultuous year, I had sometimes to rely upon oral reports which were not recorded

until a few days afterwards. It is possible, therefore, that these reports were not entirely accurate, although most of them had been verified at the time in so far as it was possible to do so. But, if in relying upon them I have done injustice to any of the persons mentioned, I beg to be forgiven; I have referred to them only when it has been necessary to recall my personal impressions and the way I reacted to them.

Mission with Mountbatten by Mr. Campbell-Johnson presents the picture as seen by the staff of Lord Mountbatten. *The Story of the Integration of the Indian States* by Sri V. P. Menon closely follows the records of the States Ministry, which up to June 1948 meant the policy which Lord Mountbatten pursued towards Hyderabad.

The scope of this work is however different. It tries to present a connected account of what exactly happened in Hyderabad during that fateful year which followed Indian Independence. This narrative of events, I hope, will give the other side of the picture, the picture of what the people of Hyderabad were passing through; of how Sardar Patel viewed and dealt with the situation; of how the actions of the Government of India became an imperative necessity. This narrative, seen and recorded by one on the spot, might also be source material for the future.

I am indebted to a number of friends who have been good enough to look through the portions of the book relating to them to see that, in so far as their impressions went, my narrative is accurate. Other friends have gone through this book and made valuable suggestions; I am deeply grateful to them.

India was a 'Dominion' up to January 26, 1950; only thereafter it became the 'Union'. But throughout this book I have used the word 'Union' for 'Dominion' as this was the term commonly used in correspondence and in my discussions with those representing the Hyderabad Government.

BHARATIYA VIDYA BHAVAN,
BOMBAY :
November 4, 1957.

K. M. MUNSHI

INTRODUCTION

I

THE MENACE THAT WAS THE INDIAN STATES

THE Mountbatten Plan envisaging the Partition of India and the relinquishment of the British power on August 15, 1947, was announced on June 3rd of that year.

On July the 2nd, Lord Mountbatten convened two conferences, one of Gandhiji and his advisers, the other of Mr. Jinnah and his. The object of the conferences was to get these two groups, which would not ordinarily meet together, to settle the draft of the Indian Independence Bill that was intended to convert India and Pakistan into self-governing Dominions.

The Indian side was represented by Mahatma Gandhi, Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru, Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel, Acharya J. B. Kripalani, then the President of the Congress, and Dr. Rajendra Prasad, the President of the Constituent Assembly. Sir Gopalaswami Ayyangar, Sir B. N. Rau, Sir Alladi Krishnaswamy Iyer and myself, all of whom had been working at the pre-session problems of the Constituent Assembly, were called in to help the Conference on legal and constitutional issues.

We sat in what is at the present time the Cabinet Room in the Rashtrapati Bhavan; the picturesque panels of the world map painted on its walls never let us forget that whatever we did had to be judged in the world context. Mr. Jinnah and his advisers sat in an adjoining room. Lord Mountbatten, spruce and smiling as ever, flitted from one room to the other, answering questions, conveying the reactions of one conference to the other, explaining the British point of view and meeting our leaders' point of view with disarming frankness.

Gopalaswami and I were old friends, and we had been closely connected with the preliminary work of the proposed Constituent Assembly since September, 1946. Alladi Krishnaswamy, perhaps the ablest lawyer in India, came to be associated with us a few months later. We formed the little group which handled what might be termed the back-room problems. Sir B. N. Rau, the constitutional adviser to the President of the Constituent Assembly, contributed his vast knowledge and detached wisdom to every issue that arose.

When the draft Independence Bill was put before us, we were shocked to find that when it was passed by the British Parliament, the five hundred and odd Indian States would automatically be afloat on the unchartered seas of chaos, like so many derelict ships. The British Crown, argued the Britisher, had acquired Paramountcy over the States through historical causes, that is, by war and diplomacy. Now that freedom was to be granted to India, the Indian Princes must also be delivered from their obligations to the British Crown. The liege lord in honour bound was setting his bondsmen free; that the overlordship had scarcely been acquired in honour, seemed not to matter.

Of the many difficulties which the new Indian Dominion had to face, none, we thought, was more disheartening, more dangerous, than this balkanising fiat.

Now that the States are integrated and the political allowances of the Princes, styled privy purses, hang on one precarious Article of the Constitution, Art. 291, few realise what a terrific menace their ambitions constituted at the time.

A Chancellor of the Chamber of Princes once remarked that an aeroplane flying from Pamir to Ceylon, or from the Arabian Sea to Nepal, would pass almost entirely over the territory of the Indian States. Taken as a whole, the area of Indian India, as it was called, was in round figures 5,00,000 square miles.

The Indian States, with their total subservience, formed the main arch of the British power in our country. Of this arch, Lord Wellesley was the first architect; Lord Canning, the first Viceroy, the last. After the great National Revolt of 1857, when the Queen of England assumed the role of the Empress of India, it was Canning who first clearly drew the lesson from it. 'The native Governments proved breakwaters to the storm, which would otherwise have swept over us in one great wave.'

For over ninety years these States, petrified under British control, continued to play an important part in maintaining foreign rule in India. With ever-changing doctrines and devices regarding their subservience and sovereignty, they provided the strongest bulwark against the rising tide of nationalism.

In 1935, the Government of India Act, the last great landmark of constitutional progress in British India, was passed.

At the time there were 118 States in the country entitled to salutes varying from 21 to 9 guns, and 441 States without that privilege. The 'salute' States ranged from Hyderabad, with an area of 82,689 square miles, to Sachin, with only 49 square miles. Of the 441 minor 'saluteless' States, 231 were in the province of Bombay and as many as 189 in North Gujarat and Saurashtra, then called Kathiawad. The Central Provinces, Central India, Bihar and Orissa claimed the remaining 121.

Apart from these States, there were numerous 'estates'. In Western India alone there were 7,798 of them, the revenue of some of which did not exceed fifteen rupees per year. Subservient to the British, they kept their people isolated from the rest of India.

The States of Baroda, Gwalior, Hyderabad, Kashmir, Mysore and Sikkim were in direct relation with the Government of India through Residents. The Resident at Baroda was also the Political Agent for Gujarat States. The Resident at Gwalior looked after Rampur and Banaras and the Resident at Mysore, after Banganapalle and Sandur.

The Agencies were: Assam States; Baluchistan States; Central India States (which included Bhopal); Eastern States (including Bengal States Agency, Chattisgarh States Agency and Orissa States Agency); Kolhapur and Deccan States; Madras States; North-West Frontier States; Punjab States; Rajputana States; and Western India States.

Through these Agencies, the Viceroy, as the Crown Representative, held unquestioned sway over all the States by virtue of the doctrine of Paramountcy. According to a theory considered sacrosanct by the British political officers and the Indian Princes, once Paramountcy was given up, the States would have no constitutional and legal homogeneity with the rest of India. They were all sovereign States.

This legalistic theory of a residuary sovereignty vested in each Indian Prince, some of whom made in a year an income scarcely equal to the monthly wages of a qualified factory foreman in Bombay, was a pure myth.

Most of the States owed both their existence and continuance to British policies. Only 18 of the States and estates were in existence in the middle of the seventeenth century. Of those only a few were ruled by families which could look back to kingly lineage. The premier family, besides that of Travancore, was that of the Guhilaputras or Ghelots, to which

the rulers of Partapgarh, Vansvada, and Dungarpur belonged; its main branch, the Sisodia, ruled over Udaipur.

The Guhilaputras could trace their descent back to Bappa Rawal, who had carved out for himself the principality of Mewad after the dissolution of the Gupta Empire in the sixth century. To the brave Guhilaputras, again, must go the credit for having fought for the freedom of the land for several centuries. To the heroic scion of the family, Rana Pratap, belonged the supreme honour of defying foreign rule with unyielding tenacity and leaving a vital tradition of independence to modern India.

The founders of the houses of Jaipur, Jodhpur, Jaisalmer, Sirohi, Bundi, Karauli, Alwar, Bikaner, Kotah, Jhalawar, Rewa, Kaccha and Soonth, acquired their principalities in the ninth and tenth centuries as the feudatories or generals of the Imperial Gurjaras of the Pratihara clan, who ruled from Kanauj as the *Maharajadhirajas of Aryavarta*.

These ruling families were one with their people. Together they had for centuries resisted the Turk, the Afghan and the Mughal, defended their ancestral faith and survived. In consequence, they had preserved a large measure of internal sovereignty even in British times.

The founders of other Rajput States were refugees who had bravely escaped with their followers from the grasping tentacles of the Sultanate of Delhi to found small principalities in inaccessible tracts. Their successors, naturally, ruled over communities which possessed only a limited element of Rajputs and Brahmanas descended from ancestors who had loyally followed the fortunes of the founders. Among these were the Houses of Orchha, Datia, Samthar and Sikkim.

The only pre-Mughal Muslim State in the India of 1935 was Kalat. Like the old Turkish invaders of India, its rulers shared the sovereignty with their sardars.

The only Hindu State founded through military resistance to the Mughals was Shivaji's. But the sovereignty, which he acquired by great statesmanship and courage, was given up when his successors got their rule validated by securing a grant from the Mughal Emperors. This State had been split into two parts, of which Satara had been merged in the province of Bombay many years before. The sole representative of Shivaji's line in 1935 was the Maharaja of Kolhapur.

Most of the remaining States came into existence after the

break-up of the Mughal Empire as a result of the British policy.

When the Mughal Empire disintegrated, its viceroys became independent rulers of the provinces which they had been deputed to govern. The ruling dynasties so founded disappeared in the troublous times which followed; the Nizam of Hyderabad alone survived. The descendants of some of the governors and jagirdars of the Empire, who also had carved out principalities under similar circumstances, ruled over what were called the Muslim States of Central India, Gujarat and cis-Sutlej. But the dynastic rule of all of them over their Hindu subjects would have been wiped out by the Marathas but for the British.

Similarly, at no time did the Scindias, Holkars and Gaekwads claim, or posssss, any sovereign power. Such quasi-independence as they enjoyed was rendered possible by British support. Nor, without it, could they have ruled over vast tracts of Rajputana, Central India and Gujarat, whose peoples were different from them in language and tradition.

Mysore, the premier Hindu State of the South, was re-formed by the British in 1881; the State of Banaras, in 1911.

The break-up of the Mughal Empire and the destruction by the British of the Sikh kingdom of Lahore, led to the foundation of the Punjab States, including Bahwalpur and Jammu. Gulabsingh, a descendant of the Hindu ruling family of Jammu and a feudatory of Ranjitsinh of the Punjab, later added Kashmir to his domains. These States, under the British protection, had no sovereignty. The trans-Sutlej States also enjoyed no sovereign powers before the Punjab was conquered by the British.

The three hundred and twenty odd small States of Gujarat and Saurashtra were tiny principalities, ruled by petty chiefs, who paid *mulk giri* tribute to the Gaekwad of Baroda. However, they retained substantial independence only because the suzerain could not weld them into a well-organised State. The British, when they conquered Western India, relieved the chiefs of their liability to pay tribute to the Gaekwad; at the same time they took over the administration of their principalities, purporting to do so on behalf of the rulers themselves!

The British also perpetuated the feudal system in most of these States though some of the feudatories of the larger States were granted a measure of autonomy.

At no time, therefore, had the Indian States, with the exception of Travancore, Udaipur, Nepal, Kolhapur and a few Rajput States, enjoyed independence of any sort whatever; and, save for Nepal, none had it in 1935.

Successive British statesmen continued to prize the loyalty of the Princes who ruled over backward populations under the control of British Residents or Agents. During the twentieth century, when British India was astir with national aspirations, a new constitutional doctrine was evolved by the British in India. All the States with full powers of jurisdiction were now equal in sovereignty; the treaties made by them with the East India Company were sacrosanct. But where the British interests were affected, the undefined word 'Paramountcy' overrode all obligations. This doctrine was avidly accepted by the rulers as their charter of independence.

Some time before 1935, the Standing Committee of the Chamber of Princes put forward a new and ambitious doctrine. It claimed an equal status with the British Crown; for, but for such equality the treaties made by their predecessors with the East India Company were not secure.

This claim to independence, when conceded, allowed the British to play a dual role in India. They could assert the doctrine of Paramountcy whenever their own interests were affected; at the same time, they could encourage the Princes to assert their sovereignty against the demands of their subjects to share power.

In his famous letter to the Nizam, of March 26, 1926, Lord Reading bluntly defined the doctrine of Paramountcy. 'The sovereignty of the British Crown is supreme in India and, therefore, no ruler of an Indian State can justifiably claim to negotiate with the British Government on an equal footing.' Paramountcy was paramount.

In retrospect, however, it must be admitted that Paramountcy as worked by the British throughout the nineteenth century and even in some respects till the transfer of power, was not without its good attributes. Though politically it kept what was called British India separate from Indian India, it played undoubtedly a great part in the unification of the country, particularly in the fiscal and administrative spheres. The British, whenever possible, helped to bridge the yawning gulf in the administrative systems between the two Indias; it

may be that this was the outcome of an urge to preserve imperial interests; but all the same twentieth-century India was the beneficiary of the working of Paramountcy. Its exploitation, which led the Indian Princes to stand politically aloof from nationalist India, was another matter.

India was thus effectively united in administration, though politically the divisions were played up. But once the disruptive elements were removed, the forces of unification asserted themselves with remarkable rapidity. It was only because of this subtle unifying influence that it was possible to bring about federal financial integration along with administrative integration in a record period of two years from 1948 to 1950.

On the theory of the feudal relationship between the liege and his vassals, the Indian Princes were placed under the Governor-General as the Crown Representative by the Government of India Act of 1935. In 1947, as the liege lord was departing from India, their long-cherished sovereignty appeared to the Princes to be lying before them, simply waiting to be picked up.

Many British Conservatives relied upon the pro-British-leanings and anti-democratic policies of the Princes to keep the States as happy hunting grounds for British enterprise in the future. But they all counted without the hold which national sentiment had over the people of India as a whole.

II

THE DAY-DREAMS OF INDEPENDENCE

The day-dreams of the Nizam and some of his advisers, that Hyderabad was an independent State, had no roots in history. At no time had Hyderabad been independent.

In A.D. 1707, Aurangzeb, the last of the Great Mughals, died. His empire, though it presented an imposing facade to the world, had already begun to break up. In fact, Shivaji had already given it a shattering blow from which it was never to recover.

Chin Qilich Khan, or Asaf Jah as he was called, brother of Muhammad Amin Khan, the powerful leader of the Turanian Party at Delhi, was appointed the Subedar of the Deccan in 1713, with the title of 'Nizam-ul-Mulk' (Regulator of the Realm). This was a very important office of the empire, for

the province of the Empire, known as Dakkhin or Deccan, then extend from Malava in the North to Tiruchirapalli in the South.

Before long, the Sayyed brothers, the king-makers, disappeared from the scene at Delhi. The Vazirship of the decadent Delhi was then offered to Asaf Jah, but he was a wise man; he declined the offer and returned to the Deccan.

It was not easy for Nizam I to consolidate his possessions. Ever since 1727, the great Peshwa, Balaji Vishwanath, had been extending his military supremacy over many parts of the country and both the English and the French were raising armies with which to strengthen their trading centres. The political system of the Empire was 'one vast fraud and make-believe', and Asaf Jah, like so many viceroys of the outlying provinces of the Empire, saw his opportunity. He did not renounce his formal allegiance, but, on one pretext or another, ceased to remit his annual tribute to Delhi.

In 1748, Asaf Jah died. A war of succession between his two sons followed. Dupleix, the founder of the French power in India, found an enlarged field for manoeuvre by giving support to the claim of Salabat Jah, one of the two contending heirs to the throne of Hyderabad. Bussey, the brilliant French general, was stationed at Hyderabad to protect Salabat from the Marathas. In return, Dupleix acquired for the French the four districts called the Northern Circars, which Razvi made a bid to reclaim exactly two hundred years later.

The Nizam's position was very precarious. At times he even had to flee to the European settlements for safety. But he was the Subedar of the Mughal Empire; the Imperial writ in the Deccan ran in his name; and foreign adventurers were anxious to invest their ill-gotten gains with the legitimacy of Imperial grants which he alone could issue.

By the Treaty of Paris (1763), which ended the Seven Years' War in Europe, France and England acknowledged Salabat Jah as the lawful Subedar of the Deccan, and agreed to exercise a joint suzerainty over him. Each of them, however, was only waiting to double-cross the other.

In 1766, Nizam Ali Khan, the younger brother of Salabat Jah, made his peace with the English East India Company and secured a promise of protection against the Marathas in the west and Haider Ali in the south. But Nizam Ali Khan did not remain loyal to his protectors for long. He allied himself

with Haider Ali and their combined forces attacked the British. The attack was repelled and by the Treaty of Masulipatam (1768) which followed, the British imposed a military protectorate over the Nizam installing a British Resident at Hyderabad.

But the Nizam was irrepressible in his intrigues. Behind the back of the Resident he entered into an alliance with the Marathas to oust the British. The plan failed. The East India Company stationed an officer of the King's army at the Nizam's court, with orders to pursue a policy of increasing the British hold over the Deccan at the cost of Hyderabad and to keep the Nizam helpless.

Between the period when Warren Hastings opened up the prospects of British Power in India and when Wellesley tried to establish British Paramountcy, the conditions in the Nizam's territories were extremely miserable. When Warren Hastings left India in 1784 on his voyage home, he foresaw that the Nizam, once a nominal officer of the Mughal Emperor, was destined to be a satellite, either of the rising power of the Marathas or of the East India Company. He described the Nizam's position as follows:

His dominions are of small extent and scanty revenue; his military strength is represented to be most contemptible; nor was he at any period of his life distinguished for personal courage or the spirit of enterprise. On the contrary, it seems to have been his constant and ruling maxim to foment the incentives of war among his neighbours, to profit by their weakness and embarrassments, but to avoid being a party himself in any of their contests, and to submit even to humiliating sacrifices rather than subject himself to the chances of war.¹

In 1798, the East India Company emerged the strongest military power in India. Wellesley forced the Nizam to get rid of the French contingent and agree to a larger British force being stationed at Hyderabad; in return, he secured a slice of the Nizam's territory.

In the same year, the great Tipoo Sultan, Haider Ali's son, was broken by the British. His well-governed dominions were dismembered, and a part of them was presented to the Nizam as a reward for his loyalty, or rather for having failed to go over to the enemy as was his wont.

By the logic of conquest, the East India Company became the protector, and therefore the suzerain, of the different kingdoms which it permitted to exist. In his despatch of 1789,

¹ Edward Thompson, *Making of the Indian Princes*, p. 1.

Wellesley, then Governor-General of India, sternly reminded the Nizam who had declined to deprive a noble of his pension for showing disrespect to the Company, to have 'a just sense of extensive advantages' his connections with the English had brought him. His enemies had been destroyed at little expense to himself, added the Governor-General, and 'from a weak, decaying and despised State, he has recovered substantial strength and resumed a respectable posture among the Princes of India.'¹

In 1803, more British troops were stationed in Hyderabad and other fortresses in Hyderabad State. Secunderabad became the most formidable military station for maintaining peace in south India.

The Nizams, protected by the British, spent their time in intrigue, licence and oppression. The plight of the wretched people of Hyderabad under them has been described by Sir John Malcolm, an eye-witness, as follows:

.....The different quotas to be paid by each inhabitant had been fixed; and every species of torture was then being inflicted to enforce them. Men and women, poor and rich, were suffering promiscuously. Some had heavy muskets fastened to their ears; some large stones upon their breasts; whilst others had their fingers pinched with hot pincers. Their cries of agony and declaration of inability to pay appeared only to whet the appetite of their tormentors.

Chandu Lal, who had been the principal instrument of the British, holding the Nizam in tutelage and exploiting the kingdom for their benefit, died in 1843. Then began an endless conflict between the Nizam, aided by his courtiers, and the British Resident acting through the ministers nominated by him.

In 1857, when several parts of the country had risen in revolt against the British, the Muslims in Hyderabad had been eager to join the Great Revolt, miscalled the 'Mutiny'. The British Residency was twice attacked and the Resident himself was set upon when leaving the *darbar* of the Nizam. For three months the future of India was bound up with Hyderabad. Had it joined the general movement, Madras, Mysore and Travancore-Cochin would have risen simultaneously. But Sir Salar Jung, a staunch Anglophile, saved the situation.

¹ Thompson and Garrett, *Rise and Fulfilment of British Rule in India*, 1914, p. 236.

The British never forgot this lesson. The military contingent which was stationed at Secunderabad was ever afterwards kept ready on the leash. The Resident remained the virtual master of the State and, as the Government of India put it bluntly to the Nizam later on, 'the position of the Resident as representing the paramount government of India must always be one of commanding influence and power', and that 'they were expected to seek his counsel and support on all important occasions.'

The Resident, in whom all real authority was vested, appointed the Chief Minister of the Nizam. Later, he also used to appoint and remove ministers, and enforce constitutional, financial and even administrative reforms. Sir Arthur Lothian, in his *post mortem* examination of British Policy in Hyderabad, admits that the Residents had, of necessity, to take 'a more intimate part behind the scenes in assisting the proper working of the administration in Hyderabad than in any other State.'¹

To quote Edward Thompson again:

Hyderabad, which to-day is recognised as in a class apart from the other Indian States, its ruler styled His Exalted Highness and Britain's Faithful Ally, attained this distinction entirely by the fact that it became very early a *tulchan* kingdom, straw-stuffed and held upright by the Company, except for a very brief period of forgetfulness, when a whiff of hostility from the Mahrattas was allowed to blow it down. Unlike the Mahrattas, the State had neither racial nor religious cohesion... When the final war with Tipu began, four months later. Hyderabad was not a large State. But, when war ended, its boundaries were extended. Hyderabad to-day is as large as France, but no State can ever have combined such material importance with so undistinguished a record and so fictitious an independence, until comparatively recently.⁴

During the one hundred and fifty years, which elapsed since 1798, Hyderabad became progressively more integrated within the political and economic structure of India than any of the other States. Its importance, land-locked as it was by the States of Bombay, Madhya Pradesh and Madras, was never overlooked, vital as it was as a link in the unity of India.

In 1930, Sir William Barton, an able Resident of Hyder-

¹ Sir Arthur Lothian, *Kingdoms of Yesterday*, p. 80.

² Edward Thompson, *Making of the Indian Princes*, pp. 13-15.

abad, submitted a memorandum containing the following significant observations:

Flung almost completely across the Indian peninsula, the great State of Hyderabad holds a strategic position of the first importance both from the political and military point of view. In an emergency, it could practically isolate the South from the North.

Though the vanity of the Nizam was tickled by fulsome words used in official pronouncements, he was reminded of his subservience whenever an occasion arose. Lord Reading, in his famous letter of March 26, 1926, addressed to the Nizam, refused to treat the Indian Princes as equals, whatever the language of the treaties. According to the Viceroy, responsibility for the defence and internal security of the country gave the Paramount Power the right to intervene at its discretion in the internal affairs of the State.

In fact, Hyderabad at no time had relations with any foreign country. The defence of its frontiers was maintained as part of the organic defence structure of British India; the Nizam's Army was no more than an appendix of the Indian army. The Government of India, under the last of the arrangements called the Indian States Forces Scheme of 1939, increased, decreased, armed and equipped the Nizam's army; without the Government's consent Hyderabad could not import weapons of precision, or manufacture ammunition.

The internal peace and tranquillity of the State was also the responsibility of the Government of India. The arterial communications, the railway and airways as also the postal, telegraphic and telephonic systems, were all laid through Hyderabad and operated upon by the Government of India.

The responsibility thus assumed by the Government of India required for its efficient discharge that the Nizam 'did everything to be done and abstained from every course of action declared dangerous to the common safety or the safety of any other part of India.'

By the Government of India Act, 1935, the political department of the Government of India was entrusted to the Governor-General as Crown Representative.

The trade and commerce in Hyderabad, in fact its whole economy, was bound up with that of India. The banks in Hyderabad were branches of the British-Indian banks that

were scheduled with the Reserve Bank. The State depended for its revenues upon its trade with the rest of the country. Its foodgrains as well as its manufactured and imported articles came from or through the Indian Provinces. Its currency kept alive by the British to feed the vanity of the Nizam, was linked with the Indian currency at a fixed rate of exchange.

The people of Hyderabad, 16,000,000 in numbers, were an integral part of the great communities of India closely connected by social, religious and cultural bonds. 86% of them were Hindus: 12½% Muslims: 1½% Christians and others. Of them 7,000,000 spoke Telugu: 4,000,000 Marathi and 2,000,000 Kannada. Urdu was spoken mostly by the ruling Muslim group, till a new policy of Urdu-ising the State was introduced.

It was this Hyderabad which the Nizam hoped to make an independent Islamic State.

To him, it all seemed so simple.

CHAPTER I

MY ARRIVAL IN HYDERABAD

IT was about December 20, 1947. 'Munshi! will you go to Hyderabad?' asked Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel, then India's Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of States.

We were having tea at the time. I was surprised, even a little taken aback. 'We have to send an Agent to Hyderabad under the Standstill Agreement,' he added.

I could see that he intended the question to be taken seriously. The matter was, of course, important. The previous few months had been extremely exciting. The country had not yet recovered from the tremendous upheaval which had followed the Partition. Millions of refugees were still unsettled; many more were still crossing the border; the integration of the States was not yet complete; Junagadh had not yet been integrated and Kashmir was causing endless anxiety. Hyderabad, as Sardar himself had said, was 'a cancer in the belly of India.'

On November 29, after exasperating negotiations, a one year's Standstill Agreement between India and Hyderabad had been reached. Sardar, in his statement to the Constituent Assembly on that occasion, had expressed the hope that during that period the way would be paved for permanent accession. Meanwhile the Nizam of Hyderabad, strengthened by a new set of advisers, was determined to maintain for himself the status of an independent sovereign which, according to him and them, he had acquired when the British left India on August 15, 1947.

Hundreds of families, frightened of the Razakars, a Muslim communal organisation with terroristic tendencies, had sought refuge in the surrounding Indian provinces. The country felt that by entering into the Standstill Agreement the Government of India had lost its grip over Hyderabad affairs.

Gandhiji was unhappy about both men and events and New Delhi was a vast whispering-gallery, in which even the wildest rumours were readily believed.

I had been closely associated with the indomitable Sardar

since the days of the Bardoli Satyagraha of 1928. He had then given a formidable power to Gandhiji's Civil Disobedience and shaken to its foundation the prestige which it had taken the British over a hundred years to build. As an independent member of the Bombay Legislative Council at the time I had been to Bardoli to see things for myself. What I saw there was the triumph of the Gandhian technique under Sardar's leadership. I was also able to observe in action the superb gifts with which Sardar was endowed and which have since changed the face of India and the course of her history. Not only had he strength and courage, but also the ability to organise and inspire. He had also rare insight into the realities of the situation and genius for getting others to do things in his way.

Since that time we had been drawn to each other by mutual affection. He was the main source of my strength in 1937, when I was the Home Minister of Bombay. We were together in the Yeravada Jail in 1940-41; and when my health broke down there he looked after me with almost maternal care. Instinctively, we had grown to understand each other.

To work under Sardar had been always a privilege and pleasure, for above all he was a wise and generous chief. He cheerfully suffered the shortcomings of his friends and was loyal to them in their difficulties and failures. Those who crossed him in any way, however, could look for help to Heaven alone!

A close understanding had grown up between us; so when he talked of Hyderabad, I immediately knew that he really wanted me to go. I did a little quick thinking, for I was in no mood to take up the proposed assignment. The thought of tearing myself away from the Constituent Assembly, which occupied the whole of my time, was distressing. However, Sardar wanted me to go, and perhaps my duty lay in Hyderabad.

'I must first consult Bapu (Gandhiji),' I said. 'And if I go, it will be as a member of the Constituent Assembly. I will accept no salary.'

'Yes, consult Bapu,' he agreed.

I met Mahatma Gandhi that very evening. He knew my weaknesses well and that one of them was an inability to follow any man blindly.

'Bapu,' I used to tell him when I was reluctant to accept his advice, 'you have a *satya* (truth)—it may be a big one;

I also have a *satya*, perhaps a small one. But let me follow it.' And, in his greatness, he never grudged me that liberty.

When I told him of Sardar's proposal, Gandhiji not only approved of it, but did not allow me the option of refusal. He also approved of my decision not to take any salary.

'It is not merely a commission,' he said, 'it is your *dharma*.'

'But,' I protested, 'the job is difficult.'

'I know,' he said. 'The job is difficult. But you will not fail. If such as you hesitate to undertake this work, how are we to make any progress?'

Bapu's confidence in me was always a source of strength. Yet an indefinable something seemed to pull me back as I thought of the magnitude and complexity of the Hyderabad problem.

Bapu read my mind. 'Of course, the Razvi group will not like you.'

'Of that I am sure,' I replied.

But that, he thought, should make no difference to my decision.

It seemed that an exciting future lay in front of me on the banks of the Musi, where the Nizam was playing for high stakes and destiny was indulging in strange tricks.

But the next day, when I left for Bombay, I had not reached a decision.

The following day, when the telephone rang, the Sardar's voice came from Delhi. 'When are you going to Hyderabad?'

'I only came here yesterday', I explained, 'and I am still rather undecided.'

'But you must go to Hyderabad without delay,' he said. 'Why not come to Delhi tomorrow morning and settle everything?'

Sardar had a way of saying things which made hesitation look completely out of order. His talk, particularly on the telephone, was limited to a few purposeful words.

The next day I arrived in Delhi and went to the Sardar straight from the airport. 'Have you finally decided?' I asked.

'What is there to decide!' was his retort. 'You are to go to Hyderabad as soon as possible. Menon will see you and fix up everything.'

'Are you sure the Nizam will accept me?' I asked. 'It will be awkward if, after you have appointed me, you are obliged to cancel the appointment.'

I knew that my presence in Hyderabad as India's Agent-General was not going to be hailed with joy.

Ten years earlier, when I was Home Minister of Bombay, I had declined to oblige the Nizam by taking action against the Arya Samajists who were halting at Sholapur on their way to Hyderabad to offer Satyagraha. It was no part of my duty to support the Nizam against the long-suffering Hindus of his State in their struggle to secure their religious freedom. Again, in 1942, I had left the Congress to carry on a vigorous campaign for Akhand Hindustan—Undivided India—against the disruptive tactics of the Muslim League. My old friend, Jinnah, had then been furious with me, a fact of which the Nizam's Government was not likely to be ignorant.

Sardar, however, was firm. When he said a thing, he meant it; once he was committed to a step, nothing could stop him from taking it.

Sure enough, the Nizam did not relish my appointment when it was announced on December 25. He suggested to Lord Mountbatten that the Agent-General should confine himself to his specific duties as a trade agent and must not interfere with other matters. The States Ministry declined to accept this position, pointing out the relevant clauses of the Standstill Agreement. The functions of the Agent-General of India included the safeguarding of External Affairs, Defence and Communications, the control of which had been vested in the Government of India by the Agreement.

The next day at 2, Windsor Place, which I was then occupying as a member of the Constituent Assembly, Sri V. P. Menon, Secretary to the States Ministry, familiarly referred to in New Delhi as 'V. P.,' together with the Additional Secretary, Sri C. C. Desai, discussed the details of my appointment with me. Menon was by far the ablest of the highly placed civil servants of the Government of India at the time and was engaged in vigorously implementing the Sardar's policy of integrating the Indian States. He bore (with apologies to Milton) on his

Atlantean shoulders

The weight of multitudinous monarchies.

But, as I was to discover later, even V. P. Menon had only a hazy idea of where I was to stay and what I was to do in Hyderabad. When I asked him where I was to live, he answered, 'Of course at the Bolarum Residency.'

There were two Residencies, one in Hyderabad proper and the other more than ten miles away at Bolarum, a suburb of Secunderabad.

'What about my staff?'

'We shall be giving you one officer. The others you must find for yourself in the Provinces.'

'Any papers?'

'The previous record is being typed and will be forwarded to you in a few days.'

On one thing Menon was definite. I had to reach Hyderabad by January 5, 1948.

Next day I called on Lord Mountbatten. This dashing, glamorous statesman had an inimitable way of tendering compliments. He was kind enough to remark that the job was one for a front-rank politician and he was glad I had been selected. He also gave me a short resume of the previous negotiations. He said that he did not think that my mission would last for more than three or four months, by which time the Nizam would have acceded. 'Even now,' he said, 'he is helpless.' Kasim Razvi, the President of the Ittehad-ul-Mussulmeen and the leader of its storm-trooper corps, was pledged to maintain Muslim supremacy in the Deccan and had over-awed him. But Sir Walter Monckton was still there as the Constitutional Adviser of the Nizam. 'We are partners in this venture,' he said. 'Once the Nizam leaves Hyderabad and comes, say, to Delhi, he will sign the Instrument of Accession. Then we can deal with Razvi.'

Before I left Lord Mountbatten, he told me of his friendship with Sir Walter Monckton. It dated, he said, from the time when the latter had been the legal adviser to the Prince of Wales, now Duke of Windsor, and he himself, the Aide-de-Camp.

I knew Sir Walter by the great reputation he enjoyed as a lawyer. As counsel he was most in demand by the solicitors of the Bombay High Court in appeals to the Privy Council. Some of the cases I had conducted in Bombay had been admirably handled by him in appeal to the Privy Council.

Then I called on Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru, the Prime Minister. He gave me an account of the activities of the State Congress. 'Hyderabad is sure to accede,' he said. 'It cannot run away from India.' His optimism was infectious. I too felt certain that I would return with an Instrument of Accession in my pocket by the end of April.

Before leaving for Bombay I again saw Gandhiji. 'I want you to promise me that you will exercise your utmost skill in order to bring about a settlement,' he said.

I gave the promise, but asked him how long the negotiations should continue. 'Should they last interminably?', I asked.

He laughed. He guessed what was passing in my mind. 'Shall we say for three or four months?'

'And if they fail, what then?'

'There will be no alternative but to bring things to an end (*to pachhi puru karej chhutako chhe*),' was his cryptic reply.

He then asked me to take Sudhir Ghosh with me. Knowing that he was one of his loyal adherents, I replied, 'Certainly I will.'

My appointment was well received in the country. It was a 'proof of the importance,' as a leading daily newspaper of New Delhi put it, 'which the States Ministry attaches to the situation in Hyderabad State and the need for constant watchfulness.'

A good reputation in one camp is not necessarily a passport to a similar appreciation in the other. When, for instance, Dr. R. C. Majumdar informed a friend of his in Calcutta about my appointment, the latter observed, 'I am sorry for the Nizam.'

'Why?', asked Dr. Majumdar.

'The Nizam is finished,' was the reply.

There was a flutter in Hyderabad. 'Why does this *Shaitan* come here?' a Minister was reported to have asked of one of his colleagues. Kasim Razvi, the President of the Ittehad-ul-Mussulmeen, was furious.

Needless to say, my friends in Bombay were jubilant, and gave several parties to congratulate me. Few of them, however, realised the weight of the burden that I was about to shoulder. Recalling Baldwin's words I simply replied to the various speeches wishing me success: 'Don't give me your congratulations; I want your prayers.'

Selecting my staff was like the snaring of fugitive birds. Ultimately, Chief Minister of Madras O. P. Ramaswamy Reddiar, gave me M. T. Raju of the Indian Civil Service, his Director of Industries, now Home Secretary, Andhra. Orissa gave me Raghupati, a newly recruited officer of the Indian Administrative Service, who had been with the army at Secunderabad and whom I knew well.

I also met an endless succession of people. In Bombay I talked to Swami Ramanand Tirth and Melkote, the leaders of the Congress organisation of the State. Pingle Venkatarama Reddy, the Deputy Prime Minister of the Nizam's Government, an old colleague of mine when I was the Chairman of the Bombay Life Assurance Company, also told me a few things. At Madras I met L. N. Gupta, the Finance Secretary of the State, who knew the situation well. Soon I had gathered sufficient information to convince me that I was in for a stormy time.

By the beginning of the year 1948, Sudhir Ghosh and an officer of the States Ministry were already in Hyderabad. The Nizam's Government had no intention of providing any accommodation for us. Sudhir, however, shifted to the Hyderabad Residency. Trouble started at once. Mir Laik Ali, the Prime Minister of Hyderabad who had once been a client of mine, demanded of Sardar that Sudhir should go out of the Residency at once.

Telegrams were also exchanged between Lord Mountbatten and the Nizam. The former wanted that I should be allowed to occupy the Bolarum Residency—now *Rashtrapati Nilayam**—until January 15 when I could move into 'Deccan House' belonging to the Government of India, which was going to be vacated by that date by the General Officer Commanding the Indian troops stationed at Secunderabad. The Nizam declined to allot either the Hyderabad or the Bolarum Residency for my use even for a few days. It was against the settlement; it was unconstitutional. The Agent-General would be taken as having the status of the British Resident. He suggested that I should be Laik Ali's guest for the eleven days; otherwise, he urged, at the very outset 'our new and happy relations' would be embittered.

Endless messages were exchanged on the telephone between Delhi, Bombay and Hyderabad. There was an uproar

* The South India residence of the President of India.

in Hyderabad. How dare India's Agent occupy the Residency? Demonstrations followed. 'I will not permit even the winds of the Indian Union to blow towards the State of Hyderabad,' roared Kasim Razvi at one meeting. 'If Munshi occupies the Residency, he will not only be resisted but the bricks of the building will be thrown into the river Musi,' he continued. The meeting ended with the cry of 'May Independent Hyderabad live long!' In the eyes of the Ittehad, the Agent-General was a foreign enemy.

This discussion was scarcely conducive to enhancing the dignity of the office I held. With the consent of Delhi, therefore, I instructed my officers in Hyderabad to invite the leading citizens of the City to an At Home at the Hyderabad Residency on January 5 and Mir Laik Ali and his colleagues to a dinner party on the evening of the same day.

Laik Ali was in great distress. He begged me on the phone to avoid all complications by agreeing to be his guest. I declined. This was not a personal matter, I said. In the end, the Nizam was graciously pleased, as a personal favour to Lord Mountbatten, to permit India's Agent-General to occupy the Bolarum Residency for eleven days from the 5th of January to the 15th, but for those eleven days only.

When this matter was settled, Laik Ali pressed me to cancel both the party and the dinner. I replied that the invitations had already been sent and could not be cancelled. Ultimately, we came to a friendly settlement. Both the At Home and the dinner were to be held at the Bolarum Residency where I was to stay, but the dinner, which I was to have given to the ministers of the Nizam, was to become Laik Ali's welcome dinner to me!

Raghupati joined me on or about the 3rd of January. On the 4th, a tall and stiff young military officer came to me at 10-30 P.M. to report that he was under orders to be my A.D.C. I could see his ill-concealed disgust at being an A.D.C. to a *dhoti*-clad Agent-General. He began the conversation by saying that he would like me to let him go; he had the chance of being an A.D.C. to the Governor of Bombay. At any rate, if he came with me, I ought to promise him, he said, a higher salary and rank.

At that late hour, when I was worried about what was going to happen to us the next day, this young man's attitude

was more than I could suffer in silence. 'I am going to Hyderabad, and you are being sent from Delhi, *both on duty*. You can do as you like. Drop out if you want to,' I shouted.

Next morning, the young man joined me at the aerodrome. Two days later, he was bundled out. Luckily, in Raghupati I had a loyal and brave man on whom I could rely. But he was at that time passing through an emotional crisis of his own and had to be dealt with care.

God alone knew how I was going to piece together these ill-assorted men into an organic office.

On the morning of January 5 we flew to Hyderabad in a chartered plane flying the National Flag. A huge crowd, consisting mostly of Hindus, gave us a hearty welcome at the Hakimpeth Aerodrome with tumultuous cries of '*Gandhiji-ki-Jai*'. The people of Hyderabad had been completely overawed by the Ittehad and had come to feel that the Standstill Agreement had thrown them to the wolves. The appointment of the Agent-General, however, had some heartening effect. In fact, after my appointment had been announced, a large number of Hindus, who had fled, returned to Secunderabad.

There were Indian troops at the airport and I had my first experience of taking a salute. I do not remember how I responded; may be, I was a little clumsy. At the request of the officers, I also said a few words paying tribute to our soldiers in Kashmir. That speech gave one more provocation to the ruling clique and the Ittehad.

In the Bolarum Residency, I unfurled the National Flag by the side of the Nizam's. I then met the guests at the At Home. The officials and the pro-Ittehad leaders, however, were conspicuous by their absence.

A Press Conference followed. The representatives of the Ittehad Press were insolent and tried to bait me. One of the questions which was asked in a very offensive tone was 'I hope you are going to address Ala Hazrat as "Your Majesty".' The Ittehad claimed that as the Nizam had become independent, he should be addressed by that title. 'I will address him exactly as my Government does in its communications,' I said.

The dinner party, originally intended to be mine to Laik Ali but now become Laik Ali's to me, went off very well. Laik Ali made a pleasant speech of welcome. I replied by saying how happy I was to be in their midst and referred to

a historical novel of mine, the action of which was placed in an ancient town near Hyderabad. I made the reference in all innocence; but it was considered an affront: I had referred to a Hindu kingdom!

The Nizam, his cabinet and the Ittehad had decided to treat Hyderabad as independent by ignoring the arrival of India's Agent-General. I wondered whether they had really succeeded in doing so.

CHAPTER II

HIS EXALTED HIGHNESS

AS Agent-General of India in Hyderabad, one of my first official duties was to call on Nizam VII, His Exalted Highness Mir Osman Ali Khan, the seventh ruler of the Asaf Jahi dynasty.

On January 9, 1948, accompanied by Mir Laik Ali, the Prime Minister of Hyderabad, I drove to the King Kothi. The Kothi is a collection of several ugly houses which are occupied by the Nizam, his extensive harem and his Arab guards, with a high wall surrounding them.

The thought of meeting the Nizam, the world's richest and most extraordinary man, in actual flesh and blood, was mildly exciting.

As we stepped out of the car, I saw a thin old man with a stoop standing on the verandah. He was wearing a faded fez, a moth-eaten muffler, an old *sherwani* and a *pyjama* which had last been pressed when they had first come out of the tailor's shop. It was difficult for me to place this man correctly. But Laik Ali's very low and respectful bow in the appropriate Hyderabad style left no room for doubt. I stood in the presence of the Exalted.

The Nizam greeted me with a conventional and tired smile and shook me by the hand. We then stepped into a shabby, shapeless room, littered with faded statuettes and ornamental vases in auction-room disorder. The atmosphere was reminiscent of a bye-gone age; of Dupleix, Bussey, Wellesley and Chandu Lal; a strange world of fossils with which the fundamental rights, sovereign republics and economic justice in which I was soaked at the time, had nothing whatsoever to do.

We settled down to a general, rambling talk, among other things, about the founder of the Asaf Jahi dynasty; about my novels, of which he seemed to have gathered some information; of the heavy burden of income-tax in India, of which he was anxious to hear. There was also a covert enquiry concerning the income-tax I was paying. Throughout the interview the one topic uppermost in our minds—Indo-Hyderabad

relations—was scrupulously avoided. With characteristic jerks, the Nizam assailed me with questions, often unconnected with one another, and scarcely awaited my answers. At times he slapped his thigh to record his own approval of what he happened to say!

Thus, my first visit to him ended. It was the last one, too, before the house of cards that he had built collapsed on September the 17th.

The Nizam—‘the richest man in the world’—had been accepted as a semi-mythical figure throughout India and in other parts of the world. Endless stories about his ways, his love of money and his autocratic habits could be heard almost anywhere. In Hyderabad itself there was no dearth of them, and many would make most interesting reading. But I must exercise self-restraint.

By all reports, the Nizam had two loves, money and power. But of the two, the first and ever-absorbing passion was for money which, I am sure, he spelt with a capital ‘M’. Starved of a handsome competence as an heir-apparent, he never forgot the value of money, in spite of his vast income. He had a privy purse of five million rupees a year and sundry allowances from the State as well as an annual income of twenty-five million more from *Sarf-i-Khas*, a large chunk of the State which he treated as his private property.

Then there was the perennial stream of *nazars*. Among the few papers which escaped the destruction of records which the last Resident carried out in August, 1947, I found a list of the *nazars* which had been presented to the Nizam on his birthday. Every notable person who visited the Exalted, either by invitation or not, was obliged to present an *asharfi*, a gold sovereign—or its equivalent which was Rs. 124/—as *nazar* for the privilege of meeting him. On his birthday, he received *nazars* from everyone, from the wealthiest nobles down to a low paid officer.

Anything which brought money was highly attractive to the Nizam; anything which cost him money, an unimaginable horror. He rarely dressed in new clothes; he generally drove in an old, rattling, tin-pot of a car, a 1918 model; he never offered any kind of hospitality to a visitor.

It was said that cash, currency notes, gold, silver and jewellery, estimated at a fabulous value, were stacked in the *Nazar-i-Bagh* of the King Kothi in cellars, safes, cupboards,

even on tables and floors. The floors of the *Nazar-i-Bagh* could not, therefore, be swept by the servants except under the watchful eye of the Exalted. Valuables which lay on the ground were covered with white sheets lavishly besprinkled with the droppings of the doves and rodents which, like ancient dragons, guarded the treasure. The mice, I was told, were very friendly. When the Nizam sat looking at his treasures and sipping his coffee, the friendly little horrors, undeterred by the august presence, shared the coffee from the saucer. The story, if too good to be true, is too amusing to be omitted.

Some years ago, so one of the stories ran, the Nizam had the treasures brought out in trucks and kept in front of the window of his sitting-room. Thus he had the opportunity of gazing at his beloved treasures with loving eyes for hours on end.

The Nizam, it was said, had an abundant harem.¹ There was the principal Begum, the mother of the Princes and Princess, who looked after the Nizam. This Begum was an eccentric lady who lived in a world of her own. A Hindu lady, converted to Islam, also lived in the King Kothi, but in a separate house. There were scores of other women, too, each housed in a cubicle of her own. Many interesting stories were in circulation about this womanly paradise, but they are not relevant to these memories.

Several other sons and daughters lived with the Nizam at the King Kothi, and it was said that he was solicitous in the matter of their health. No one dared complain of so much as a headache; for, if a complaint was heard, the sufferer's rations would be cut off in order to ensure a speedy recovery. Sometimes, said the malicious tongues, the reduced rations were not too easily restored.

The two Princes—the Prince of Berar and Muazzam Jah—had once lived with their father. But there had been a filial revolt and Lord Willingdon, who was then the Governor-General, had been forced to intervene. Thereafter the Princes

¹ It may be of interest to mention the beneficiaries of the Nizam's family from the Family Trust made after 1948. From the schedule of the Trust, it appears he has made provision for five minor sons of his favourite wife Laila Begum; two minor daughters; eight sons having different mothers; 37 grandchildren; 15 daughters of His Exalted Highness; heir-apparent and his mother; heir-apparent's sister; wife of H. E. H. who is the daughter of Imam Zung; 3 ladies of position: wives of His Exalted Highness and 45 mistresses or *khawases*.

lived separately, but by no means economically. In addition to the fat allowances they were provided with, they borrowed freely from speculative money-lenders who hoped to get their money back with heavy compound interest when the planets were propitious. I learnt later that after the integration of Hyderabad the planets did become propitious.

The Nizam's inordinate love of power was evident the moment he succeeded to the rulership of Hyderabad in 1911. When the Residency Book reported that he was installed by the Resident, as the fact was, he entered a caveat. He was not, as he asserted, installed by anybody; he came to the *gaddi* as of right. His contention was, of course, unceremoniously overruled.

When the Resident nominated Sir Salar Jung as his first Prime Minister, the Nizam immediately set in motion a chain of intrigues to eliminate the influence of the Resident in his Government.

The Nizam never lost an opportunity of asserting his personal authority and, whenever he could, flouted the advice of the Resident. He often appointed ministers before the consent of the Viceroy had been obtained and always tried to have things his own way even in small details of administration.

In 1926, the Nizam asserted a claim to be independent in the internal affairs of the State. This evoked from Lord Reading, then Viceroy of India, the famous letter of March 27 in which he unequivocally announced the doctrine that Paramountcy was paramount; that it was not derived from treaties but from the right and duty of the Government of India to preserve peace and good order throughout India; that the title of the 'Faithful Ally' did not place the Nizam in a category separate from other States'.¹

The technique of the Nizam in the affairs of the State was masterful. He invariably presented his Government with an opposition secretly built up, financed and controlled by himself. He arrived at his own decisions and systematically ignored his ministers. When his ministers reminded him of the necessity of previous consultation with them, he would shout at them. He was the ruler. If they disagreed with him, he would turn them out. They knew that he could be relied upon to keep his word, and so were dutifully subservient.

¹ *White Paper on Hyderabad*, Chapter IV, p. 19.

Sir William Barton, one of the most powerful of the Residents of Hyderabad, in his Memorandum of February 14, 1926, wrote thus:

Intrigue is in the air at Hyderabad, a vigorous survival from Moghul, and still earlier, times. It is with some people almost a pastime. Often the methods are clumsy and easily seen through. On the other hand, there is frequently a delicacy of touch, a finesse worthy of the trained and cultured brain behind it, the whole constituting a drama very interesting to watch at when it unfolds.

In this land of intrigues, where mastery of the art was a pre-condition of survival, no one was a patch on the Nizam himself.

The Nizam was a very ambitious man, and his one aim was to convert Hyderabad into an Islamic State. Before Mr. Jinnah developed his concept of Pakistan, this ambition came very near success. The Nizam's was the more spectacular offer, for he succeeded in overawing 86% of his Hindu subjects into impotence.

At the same time, the Nizam dreamt of the supreme glory of becoming the head of the entire Muslim world. This suited the world policy of the British. The Nizam, as their 'Faithful Ally', was good pro-Muslim propaganda in the world.

When the Ottoman Empire collapsed, the Nizam, as the surviving relic of the Moghul Empire, was induced to get his sons married to the daughters of the family of the ex-Sultan of Turkey. The idea was to mingle the ashes of two dead empires, so that a fresh prestige might rise out of them.

The Nizam was the pathetic victim of these obsessions which the British encouraged him to entertain.

In fact the Nizam was the apex of the antedeluvian political structure of Hyderabad. Supplied with a vast, untaxable income and surrounded by a host of courtiers of every rank, each intriguing against the other, he maintained a vast number of dependants. A network of spies was spread over every walk of life. The Muslim officers, who looked to him for advancement, were either loyal or servile to him. The Hindu officers, though few, were suffered as nuisances and spied upon as aliens. The British nominees among the ministerial or official ranks, were also spied upon, circumvented and never permitted to work freely. If the Resident's support was withdrawn from any of them, he was soon got rid of.

Everyone found it difficult to get along with the Nizam. Was it not Sir Theodore Tasker, Revenue Minister, who once stated that the task of the Executive Council was to act as a nursemaid to a sick child with pronounced suicidal tendencies? Sir Mehdi Yar Jung, a fine old aristocrat, whom I had the privilege of meeting during his last illness, once told the Executive Council that while in England the Ruler was the Head of a State run by the party in power, in Hyderabad, the Ruler was the Leader of the Opposition!

The Nizam's claim and power to be the sole authority in the State arose from several factors besides temperament and tradition.

Out of 82,698 square miles in the State, 8,109 square miles, yielding a revenue of Rs. 2,50,00,000/- were *sarf-i-khas*, the private property of the Nizam, over which he had absolute sway.

Besides, the *jagir* villages comprised 25,629 square miles. The feudal lords of the Paigas, Jagirdars and Samsthans held sway over these *jagirs* at the sweet will of the Nizam, for he exercised the absolute right to recognise succession to them, to levy *nazars* from the *jagirdars* and to appoint officers to control them.

Absentee landlordism, rackrenting, serfdom, forced labour and countless inhuman and corrupt practices continued to undermine the vital economy of this vast area.

The Paiga *jagirdars* for instance were the nearest approach to the medieval barons of Europe. As masters of their domain, they maintained, till 1929, a kind of police force, very ill-organised no doubt, but strong enough to terrorise the unarmed villagers.

The people walked in darkness. The percentage of literacy was negligible. Their highest educational institution was the middle school. The school teacher generally received a salary of Rs. 3/- per month.

The *taluqdar* or the revenue collector was the head of the administration in the Paigas. He collected the revenue, acted as the magistrate, tried civil suits. He was in charge of education, public works, local administration and irrigation. His principal function was to extort money. Like some old time *jagirdars* in British India, he also collected strange taxes. Among them were taxes levied on the fruits of all *babul* trees, even those standing on private lands; on the right to sell snuff;

A formidable source of the Nizam's power was his position as the accepted head of the Muslim community and the dispenser of official favours. The members of the rich and accomplished Muslim aristocracy had to depend upon him for their status, official favours and career of their sons. The officials of the State, 75 per cent. of whom were Muslims, were traditionally corrupt, unsympathetic to the people and irksome in their aggressive communalism. The Police and the military services were 95% Muslim. Industry, concentrated in a few hands, could always rely upon official connivance to coerce labour to do what it wanted.

The rural areas were 95% Hindu in population. After two centuries of subjection, the Hindus in the State had generally developed the under-dog mentality. It was found even in the ranks of the highly educated. None of them dared to point a finger at the Nizam or the Muslim Officers or at the Muslims as a community. They had developed protective colours like the chameleon to secure official favours. They glibly maintained that Ala Hazrat was a wise and just master and the Hindus and Muslims were his two eyes, equally treated in the State. In private, they were bitter beyond description.

In the beginning of the century Srimati Sarojini Naidu, who was steeped in the traditions of the Muslim aristocracy in Hyderabad, addressed an ode to the Nizam, some of the lines of which ran as follows:—

* * *

Beneath whose sway concordant dwell
The peoples whom your laws embrace,
In brotherhood of diverse creeds,
And harmony of diverse race:

* * *

So many the lustre of your days
Outshine the deeds of Firdausi sung,
Your name within a nation's prayer,
Your music on a nation's tongue.

I did not find any vestige of the concordance so eloquently sung. But it shows how the make-believe of communal harmony with which the Nizam surrounded himself could make an impression on the heart of a youthful poetess.

There was a general conspiracy, only broken by private whispers, to uphold the belief that Ala Hazrat was the master. Above everything, his views, whoever might have dictated them, were to be referred to with bated breath and whispering humbleness. This tradition was scrupulously fostered by the palace coterie; it could only rule the State by upholding the infallibility of the Nizam.

This, then, was the Ala Hazrat, with whom my lot was cast during my term as Agent-General.

CHAPTER III

TOWARDS A MUSLIM STATE

MY first task was to study the realities of power in Hyderabad.

Hyderabad was a battlefield of four struggling powers: His Exalted Highness, the Majlis-i-Ittehad-ul-Mussulmeen (known shortly as the Ittehad), the Hyderabad State Congress and the Communist Party of India.

By the Government of India Act of 1919, certain departments of the provincial governments in British India had been transferred to the control of partially elected legislatures. As a result the people in the Indian States, including those of Hyderabad, awoke to their political rights.

To meet the new situation, all that Sir Ali Imam, the progressive Prime Minister of Hyderabad, could do was to induce the Nizam to set up an Executive Council in place of his unadulterated autocracy. But no sooner was the Council set up than the Nizam reduced it to impotence and in 1920 suppressed the new stirrings of political life in the State.

Six years later, Mahmud Nawaz Khan, a retired official, founded the Majlis-i-Ittehad-ul-Mussulmeen. Its objects were to unite the Muslims in the State in support of the Nizam and to reduce the Hindu majority by large scale conversion to Islam. These moves had the blessings of the Nizam.

A little later, the Nizam spotted one Bahadur Khan at an assembly of Muslims, Mehfil-e-Milad as it was called, as an able man and elevated him to the dignified name of Bahadur Yar Jung and called upon him to lead the Ittehad.

After the rebuff given by Lord Reading to the Nizam in 1926, the British Crown stepped in to control the misrule in Hyderabad. Four British officials were appointed to take charge of the important departments of the State including Revenue, Police and Industries. One of them was appointed a member of the Executive Council. The Nizam was also called upon to accept the unanimous recommendations of the Council.

The Muslims of Hyderabad, the beneficiaries of the Nizam's autocracy, deeply resented this encroachment upon it. This led to the birth of the Mulki Movement which had for its

object the elimination of all non-Hyderabadis from positions of power and influence.

The Mulki Movement, as one of its manifestos said, was 'out to find a formula that will satisfy the vested interests, the Hindu-Muslim subjects of H. E. H. the Nizam, and meet with the gracious approval of our benign Master. The movement has a great mission to perform and it has come to stay'. It ended with the slogan: 'Long Live the Nizam, the Royal Embodiment of Deccani Nationalism'.

The non-Mulkis in the State were mostly Muslims from North India and were interested in diverting the passions which that movement had roused. They, therefore, raised the slogan of the Muslim sovereignty of Hyderabad. By its very nature this was a pro-Muslim movement and therefore, anti-British and anti-Hindu. Bahadur Yar Jung, naturally, put himself at its head and soon became the acknowledged leader of the Muslims.

From the movement proclaiming the Nizam as the 'Royal Embodiment of Deccani Nationalism' to the one which hailed him as the 'Royal Embodiment of Muslim Sovereignty in the Deccan' was a far cry. Both slogans, however, were supported by the Nizam and were for his benefit.

The Ittehad, under the leadership of Bahadur Yar Jung, became a powerful communal organization, the main objective of which was to thwart the political aspirations of the Hindus and the progressive Muslims. In trying to transmute the Mulki sentiment into anti-Hindu communalism, therefore, Bahadur Yar Jung embarked upon an activity for converting the Hindus in certain districts of Hyderabad to Islam. This evoked a determined opposition from the Hindus, but gained for the sponsor the halo of a holy crusader among the Muslims.

However, with India on the march towards parliamentary democracy, it was not easy to suppress popular aspirations in the State. In 1929, therefore, further steps were taken to ban all public meetings in the State. This ban, in practice, was applied only to Hindus; the Ittehad, as the King's party, was free to do what it liked.

The five years from 1930 to 1935 saw the tidal waves of the *Satyagraha* movement, led by Gandhiji, sweeping over the country; the Round Table Conferences of Indian and British politicians in London; and the passage of the Government of India Act, 1935, through the British Parliament.

In 1935 the Nizam's Subjects' League, a non-communal organization, was set up by some leading men to secure responsible government in Hyderabad. The Nizam's Government immediately took exception to this move. No responsible government could be asked for in the State; it was the privilege of Ala Hazrat alone to govern his subjects. As a result, the League died at its birth.

Hyderabad had three linguistic belts: one, of the Telugu-speaking districts; another, of the Marathi-speaking districts; the third, of the Kannada-speaking districts. Each had its own regional associations of public workers called Mahasabhas. Though their ostensible aim was to carry on social and educational activities, they kept alive political activities of a sort.

The tide did not halt at the command of King Canute, nor did the tide of political aspirations halt at the behest of the Exalted. When the Government of India Act of 1935 conceded provincial autonomy in British India, a similar demand was made in the Indian States. In 1937, the Nizam tardily appointed a Reforms Committee for 'the more effective association of the different interests of the State with the Government.'

The disappointment felt by the people at these dilatory tactics found expression in the progressive Hindus and Muslims joining hands to call a Convention. Immediately, the apple of discord was thrown in their midst. Were the Hindus willing to concede 50 per cent. representation to 13 per cent. Muslims? As no answer in the affirmative was forthcoming, the Muslim members withdrew from the Convention. This 50 : 50 Communal Ratio became a constitutional fundamental with the Nizam and his advisers till the end of the old regime.

'The Nizam moreover, in present conditions, can make no constitutional change which will not (sic) diminish the past privileges of the Muslims and so antagonise the Ittehad, whose members in the past have been his main supporters; while nothing that is practicable for him to do will go far enough to meet the demands of the Hindus and so gain him new supporters in place of those he forfeits by such action',¹ wrote Sir Arthur Lothian who was highly sympathetic to the Nizam, in 1947. This was true from 1937.

In 1937, Sir Akbar Hydari, then the Finance Minister, was appointed the President of the Council, or, as was loosely call-

¹ Sir Arthur Lothian, *Kingdoms of Yesterday*, pp. 185-186.

ed, the Prime Minister. Sir Akbar soon found himself in an unenviable position. The local Muslims suspected him of trying to lead the State into accepting an All-India Federation envisaged by the Government of India Act of 1935, while the British Government accused him of insisting on State rights to thwart federation.

Sir Akbar, though not a fanatic by any means, had to do some tight rope-walking.

In order to appease the aggressive Muslim sentiment, Sir Akbar appointed Khwaza Moin-ud-Din Ansari, later known as Nawab Moin Nawaz Jung, as the Secretary of his Executive Council. He was in high favour with the Ittehad bosses and was related to the group which controlled their organ, the daily *Rahbar*. Moin Nawaz soon became the conscience-keeper of the Ittehad.

In July, 1938, two Congress leaders, Sri Ramachar and Sri B. Ramakrishna Rao, the present Governor of Kerala, inaugurated the State Congress. Its modest object was to achieve responsible Government 'under the aegis of H. E. H. the Nizam of the Asafia Dynasty'.

The Nizam reacted in the usual way. On September 4, the Defence of Hyderabad Regulations were passed. Four days later, the State Congress was declared unlawful, ironically enough, on the ground that it was a communal organization. The Ittehad and the Hindu Mahasabha, avowedly communal bodies, were left free to carry on their activities unhampered.

Sir Akbar, evidently, had keen sense of humour. While the *Hyderabad Gazette* banning the Congress was under print, he convened a meeting of some public men 'to find ways and means of spreading nationalism in Hyderabad.'

Under official pressure, private harassment and threats of violence, Hindus were also being prevented from building or repairing a temple in any locality where Muslims resided. Hindu temples were often desecrated but the culprits were rarely traced, and if traced, never punished. Hindu religious teachers were prohibited from delivering discourses, while the Muslim divines, the members of the Ittehad under the leadership of Bahadur and the Deendars carried on a vigorous campaign of proselytising the Hindus.

The Hindus claimed only elementary religious freedom, as would appear from a memorial submitted to the Governor-

General and signed, among others, by Sri M. S. Aney, Sir P. C. Ray, Sir C. Y. Chintamani and Sir P. S. Sivaswami Iyer:

But if Your Excellency thinks it undesirable to institute an enquiry, we would be quite content if Your Excellency would take other steps to secure to the Hindus and the Arya Samaj the following fundamental rights:—

- (i) Freedom for the practice and preaching of the Vedic religion and culture. If a preacher makes a seditious speech or gives offence to the followers of other faith, he may be prosecuted under the law, but there is no reason to stop the preaching of Vedic religion, simply because some preachers are apt to break the law.
- (ii) Freedom for the establishment of new branches of the Arya Samaj and the building of the new Hindu temples, Arya Samaj mandirs, Sikh Gurudwaras, Yajnasthalas, Havankundas and the repairing of the old ones without obtaining any permission from the Ecclesiastical or any other department of the State.
- (iii) Liberty to start schools for the primary and secondary education of Hindu boys and girls. If the recognition is not recommended by the Educational Department, they may not be recognized, but there is no reason to demand their closure.
- (iv) Freedom to carry religious and social processions such as Nagar Kirtans through public streets with music in accordance with the custom, usage and tradition of the Hindus including Arya Samajists, Sikhs, Jains or depressed classes, etc.

In the meantime, the Arya Samaj, the then premier organization of militant Hinduism in India, launched a campaign of *Satyagraha* to vindicate the religious freedom of the Hindus. And so did the Hindu Civil Liberties Union.

That was the time when, as Home Minister in the first Congress Ministry in Bombay, I first applied my mind to the affairs in Hyderabad.

At the time, Arya Samajists from all parts of India came in batches to Hyderabad to offer *Satyagraha*. On their way, while passing through Bombay, they halted for a day at Sholapur. When Sir Akbar Hydari found the movement difficult to control, he wanted me to prevent them from passing through the Province of Bombay. His persuasive blandishments were fascinating.

‘What right have I to prevent law-abiding people from passing through my Province?’ I asked. ‘They never commit nor do they intend to commit, any offence in my terri-

tory. If they commit any such offence, I would certainly take action against them, not otherwise.'

Sir Akbar Hydari invoked neighbourly relations. I asked him whether the Hindus in Hyderabad were under religious disabilities, while Muslims were left aggressively free in religious matters. There were no such disabilities, he said; allegations to the contrary were just malicious propaganda. I asked him whether he would permit a few lawyer friends of mine to go and find out the truth on the spot. He never saw me again.

The *Satyagraha* of the Arya Samaj, in the course of which 8,000 men had gone to jail, was called off on a promise made by Sir Akbar Hydari that the religious disabilities of the Hindus would be removed. The promise was never kept in its entirety.

Sir Akbar, any way, believed in communalism as an investment.

During his long term as the Finance Minister of Hyderabad, Sir Akbar elbowed the Hindus out of the Public Works Department and the Accounts Department in which they were employed in large numbers. They were also removed from other key posts. His great influence with the British officials was also used to secure international prestige for the Nizam as a sort of a new *Khalifa*.

In the name of nationalization Sir Akbar acquired for the State 51% interest in several industrial concerns built up by the Hindus. As a lawyer I was concerned with one of the so-called arbitrations, as a result of which a large business run by a Hindu was taken over by the State.

Mir Laik Ali, an ex-Assistant Engineer in the State Service, attracted the attention of Sir Akbar Hydari and of the then Finance Minister of the State, Mr. Ghulam Muhammad, later the Governor-General of Pakistan. As a result, the Hyderabad Construction Company was floated by Mir Laik Ali to be run by himself as Chairman. Most of the Government construction work was carried out by this company and the managing agencies of several industrial concerns controlled by the State were also transferred to it.

With Mir Laik Ali as an instrument of the State, the industry was no better than a wing of the Nizam's Government. The Ittehad also received financial support from the Hyderabad Construction Company.

Though Sir Akbar Hydari publicly swore by Hindu-Muslim unity, the Government over which he presided strengthened the Ittehad, banned the State Congress and interfered with the religious freedom of the Hindus as never before.

Urdu, the official language, was spoken by a small section of the 86% Hindus; their mother-tongue was Telugu, Marathi or Kannada. In the rural areas, the Muslims spoke only a 'pidgin' Urdu, for the language in use in their homes was also one or the other of the three local languages.

The educational policy, however, was directed at supplanting the local languages by Urdu from the time the Nizam came to the *gaddi*. The State-aided education could only be given through Urdu or English. In 1915, even the optional medium of English was replaced by Urdu in schools of the State. As a result, literacy in the State was only 70 per thousand as against 103 in the adjoining province of Madras. In 1930, the proportion of Hindu and Muslim students in primary schools was 2 : 1 as against the population which bore the proportion of 8 : 1.

Besides pursuing this policy Sir Akbar lavishly financed the Osmania University. Its primary object was to attract fanatic Muslim scholars and bring up a race of young educated Muslims indoctrinated with the Muslim conquistador spirit. It spent large sums of money to make Urdu a language of power by translations of and adaptations from English books.

Most of the Hindu boys, therefore, had to join colleges affiliated to the Madras University, for even if a Hindu boy studied in the University, the chances of his being taken up in the State service were meagre.

On December 16, 1929, Lord Irwin, the then Viceroy and Governor-General of India, had uttered a warning: 'It will be the task of mature statesmanship so to shape the policy of the Osmania University that it may have as strong an appeal to the Hindus as to the Mahomedan subjects of your Exalted Highness.' The warning remained unheeded.

A characteristic incident, illustrative of the purpose and policy of the Osmania University, happened in 1939. The Hindu students were prohibited from wearing *dhotis* and *kurtas*; they had to wear the dress accepted by the Muslim students. When on *Janmashtami* day, very sacred among the Hindus, some students sang the song *Vande Mataram*, accepted universally as the prayer to the Motherland for over thirty years,

in the Hindu prayer hall, it was locked up and the students were served with an order prohibiting them from singing the song within the University precincts. Those who had sung it were given the alternative to tender an apology or to suffer rustication. The Education Department, by a communique, also prohibited the singing of the song in schools. As a result, about 1,200 students were expelled from the colleges and schools.

On the other hand, on the festival of *Milad-al-Nabi* celebrated by the Muslim students, the presiding professor said, 'I am pained to see the inertness amongst the Muslims, when there still exist 22 crores of *gobar-parast* (dung worshippers);' a term of vulgar abuse applied to Hindus.

About 1938 the constitution of the Ittehad was revised. It was made explicit in its objects that the sovereignty of Hyderabad was vested not in the Nizam or his dynasty, but in the Muslims of Hyderabad. 'The position of the Muslims of the Asafia State is', ran the amended Constitution, 'that the person and the throne of the king of this country are *emanations of the political sovereignty and social supremacy of their community and shall be maintained for ever.*' (Italics mine), Ittehad was no longer the 'King's Party'. The sovereignty of the State was vested in it. 'We are the sovereign in the Deccan', declared Bahadur.

Though the recommendations of the Reforms Committee were by no means fair to the Hindus they were varied by the Nizam's Government to their further disadvantage. Of the elected members 50% were to be Hindus and 50% Muslims, elected in joint electorates; one Christian and one Parsi were to be elected to hold the balance.

Even these changes were unacceptable to the Ittehad. Bahadur Yar Jung insisted that Hyderabad should be declared a Muslim State. Mr. Jinnah too stepped in. The leader of the Muslim League, who at one time wanted his community either to have parity with the Hindus in British India or enforce partition to give it scope, delivered an ultimatum that the Hindu majority of 87% in Hyderabad should be reduced to a statutory minority.

The not unwilling Nizam gave a written assurance that, firstly, he would nominate only Muslims to represent his *sarf-i-khas*; secondly, the Muslim representation among the elected representatives would not be less than 50%; thirdly, a

Christian and a Parsi representatives would be accommodated in the 50% representation of the Hindus.

Naturally, the Hindus, who were thus converted into a statutory minority, resented these changes. At the same time, no Muslim of nationalist views could be returned to the Council; for he could never get a majority of Muslims ready to forswear their communal sovereignty to support him.

A more shameless device to keep a majority in political subjection had never been invented. This assurance, in the words of Nawab Ali Yavar Jung, 'was a gross betrayal of trust. That was why it was kept a secret. The Ittehad thus won in the very first round'.¹

Soon after World War II, law and order was a casualty in Hyderabad.

Hitler's invasion of Russia brought the Communist Party in India in support of the war efforts of the Government of India. As a result, the ban making it illegal was lifted in British India as well as in Hyderabad. Immediately the Communists began a campaign to establish their hold over the district of Nalgonda by methods of lawless violence.

The Police were conspicuous by their absence wherever the Communists spread terror. To defy law and escape penalty became a normal feature of the life in Hyderabad, unless the defiance was offered by a Hindu in a non-violent manner.

The Muslims also began to take the law in their hands. In 1940, some students of the Osmania University, caught travelling on railways without tickets, beat the railway staff; wrecked a wayside station; raided the house of Sir Akbar Hydari; broke the head of the Director-General of Police and beat up several policemen. Though inquiry was made into these lawless acts, no punishment was awarded to the culprits.

When Bahadur Yar Jung died in 1944, the Nizam bewailed his loss in *Subah-e-Deccan*:

He was a gift from the hand of the Almighty for the sake of protecting the rights of the elect community (Muslims). His work whispered in the ear of Usman: He was brave and an expert in fighting. The disinterested service rendered by him to his community and the nation deserve praise, and will ever be treasured in ancestral loyalty to the king and country.... May God shower His blessings on his soul. We and the Prince of Berar went to his house to offer

¹ Ali Yavar Jung, *Hyderabad in Retrospect*, p. 7.

our condolences, but the Junior Prince could not go owing to his illness.

The dispute as to Bahadur's successor was decided by the Nizam in favour of Abdul Hasan Syed Ali. 'Statesmanship demands that the aim of the community is accomplished undisturbed on the same lines as were chalked out and followed by the leader (Bahadur Yar Jung)', the Nizam announced.

In the meantime, the ban on the State Congress continued. At first, the Nizam's Government insisted that the word 'Congress' should be dropped from the name of the organization. When the name was changed into 'National Conference', a further objection was raised that the word 'National' could not be used by the organization unless the Hindus came to an understanding with the Muslims.

The other objection was more fundamental. The organization aimed at responsible Government; that would mean a government dependant upon the majority in the legislature; such a government in Hyderabad would interfere with the 'undivided responsibility of the Ruler' for the welfare of his subjects!

Hindus, therefore, could have 'political' rights only if they committed political hara-kiri. Sri Ramachar and Sri Narsingh Rao, the two leaders of the regional conferences, therefore, approached the President of the Ittehad for a compromise. Being a progressive Muslim, Abdul Hasan came to an understanding with them. This was high treason. He was promptly removed from his office.

An appropriate successor to Bahadur was found in Kasim Razvi, who became the President of the Ittehad in 1946.

A graduate of the Aligarh Muslim University, Razvi was a lawyer with a small practice in Latur, a small district town in the State. He was the head of the local Ittehad and the legal adviser of a gang of goondas of the town headed by a dangerous criminal.

One day the gang looted a lorry carrying food. When a few members were arrested, it gathered a mob and tried to rescue the criminals from the Police Station. The Police opened fire. The leader of the gang was killed.

A commission was appointed to inquire into the police firing. This gave Razvi the chance he was waiting for. The majority of the members, one Hindu and the other Muslim, justified the police action; the other Muslim member—a High

Court Judge—held the firing unjustified. Later, when Razvi came into power, the judge was appointed a Judicial and Police Minister.

Razvi was a tireless worker; though a fanatic, he was cunning. He could persuade and overawe; when necessary, he could smile, be humorous, or exercise charm. Syed Taqi-ud-Din, I.C.S., the astute ex-Secretary of the Nizam's Government, was his adviser.

Razvi, as President of the Ittehad, soon began to remove his rivals and critics both from positions of influence in the Ittehad and the Government, and supported his friends to high offices, among whom was Mr. Abdur Rahim.

CHAPTER IV

BID FOR INDEPENDENCE

ON July 3, 1946, when the Cabinet Mission had arrived in India to negotiate with the Indian leaders, the Nawab of Chhatari, the Prime Minister of Hyderabad, lifted the ban which had rendered the State Congress illegal. In August, 1946, the Nizam replaced the Nawab of Chhatari by Sir Mirza Ismail.

Sir Mirza Ismail was a tried Muslim statesman of progressive views and great administrative ability, who had modernised the administration in the princely States of Mysore and Jaipur. With his experience and tireless zeal he threw himself in the work of reorganising Hyderabad.

As sweeping constitutional changes were about to take place in India, the Nizam expected Mirza to cover the so-called reforms in the State with the cloak of his great reputation and secure Berar for him. Sir Mirza's well-known contact with the Congress High Command was also expected to get the support of the Congress in securing these objectives.

Soon after his appointment as Prime Minister, Gandhiji wrote to Sir Mirza as follows:—

I have studied them somewhat as they appeared in the Press. The reforms seem to be only so-called. To me they appear to be a step backward rather than forward. I do not know that you can do much to alter them, but I wonder why you cannot scrap them altogether. The least that any State can do at this time is to recognize the status and influence of the States Peoples' Conference of which Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru is the President, and secure its endorsement before proceeding with any popular measure. This ensures a smooth passage for any such thing.¹

Sir Mirza then had high hopes of accomplishing the impossible. He replied:—

These, I realise, are unsatisfactory in several respects, but I feel that it is quite possible to remove those defects and bring the reforms into line in all essential respects with those in Mysore, Baroda, Jaipur or elsewhere. Hyderabad has its peculiar problems, and these have to be solved in its own way. If there is one thing more than another which has pleased me, it is the

¹ Sir Mirza Ismail, *My Public Life*, p. 101.

liberal attitude of His Exalted Highness towards constitutional changes.¹

Sir Mirza did not know his master. The reforms that he was expected to bring about were characteristic of Hyderabad. A Legislative Council consisting of 122 members was to be set up, of whom 76 (38 non-Muslims and 38 Muslims) were to be elected, the rest nominated. The elections for the Legislative Council were, therefore, held on the sacrosanct basis of a 50 : 50 Muslim-non-Muslim ratio, with the condition that the candidate to be declared elected should secure 51% of the votes of his own community. As a result, most of the Muslim members elected belonged to the Ittehad.

With the pitch so hopelessly queered, the State Congress did not contest the elections. Even out of the independent Hindu candidates who won the elections, thirteen leading members resigned almost at once. They soon realised that they had been returned to the Council only to be exploited in the Muslim interest.

Sir Mirza's position was unenviable. One of the organs of Ittehad wrote:—

While Muslims of India are boycotting the so-called Constituent Assembly, which has lost all its importance as a constitution-making body and has been reduced to the position of an all-India Congress committee, Sir Mirza Ismail, the Prime Minister, himself a Muslim and Chief of the Muslim Dominion of Hyderabad, is hobnobbing with Congress leaders in the lobbies of the Constituent Assembly almost every day. Sir Mirza is seen in the corridors flirting with Congress members and greeting them with folded hands like a Hindu. Sometimes he was heard saying "namaste" or "namaskaram". He is also believed to have said the Hindus, being in a great majority, would rule in the long run despite all difficulties.²

With the prospect of a division of India in the air, the Nizam decided to make an immediate bid to secure for Hyderabad the status of a separate Dominion. He had, therefore, no further use for his Prime Minister.

His enthusiasm having ebbed away, Sir Mirza resigned on May 15, 1947. 'With the withdrawal of the British control, I found, as I anticipated, that it was impossible to stay', he ruefully declared. In his resignation he observed: 'I have had the misfortune to find myself opposed at every turn by a cer-

¹ Sir Mirza Ismail, *My Public Life*, p. 102.

² *Ibid.*, p. 105.

tain section of the local Mussalmans, who in my opinion, are bent on a course that is suicidal to the State.'¹

Razvi later corroborated the fact: 'We raised our voice', he said in one of his speeches, 'and at first it had no effect. But because it came from our inner selves, Mirza had to run away from Hyderabad'.

After the resignation of Sir Mirza, the good-natured Nawab of Chhatari, unwisely allowed himself to be reappointed the Prime Minister. He became an easy victim of the Ittehad. Moin Nawaz Jung was appointed the Minister of Planning, Press and Propaganda. Taqi-ud-din was reinstated in service. Nawab Ali Yavar Jung, who as the Minister of Police was found to be too unaccommodating, was appointed the Minister of Constitutional Affairs, and the portfolio of Police was transferred to Moin Nawaz Jung.²

The Nawab of Chhatari was thus a respectable facade behind which the Ittehad strengthened their hold over Hyderabad. The Nizam also perceived the advantage of having the intensely anti-Indian Ittehad pledged to the independence of Hyderabad in the control of his Government.

In the result, when the negotiations for accession between Hyderabad and India began, the Nizam was the autocratic Head of an avowedly Islamic State, increasingly controlled by fanatical Muslims led by Razvi and guided by Moin Nawaz Jung.

At the beginning of 1946 or so, the Nizam obtained the opinion of an uncanny lawyer who also, as it appears, was a political prophet.

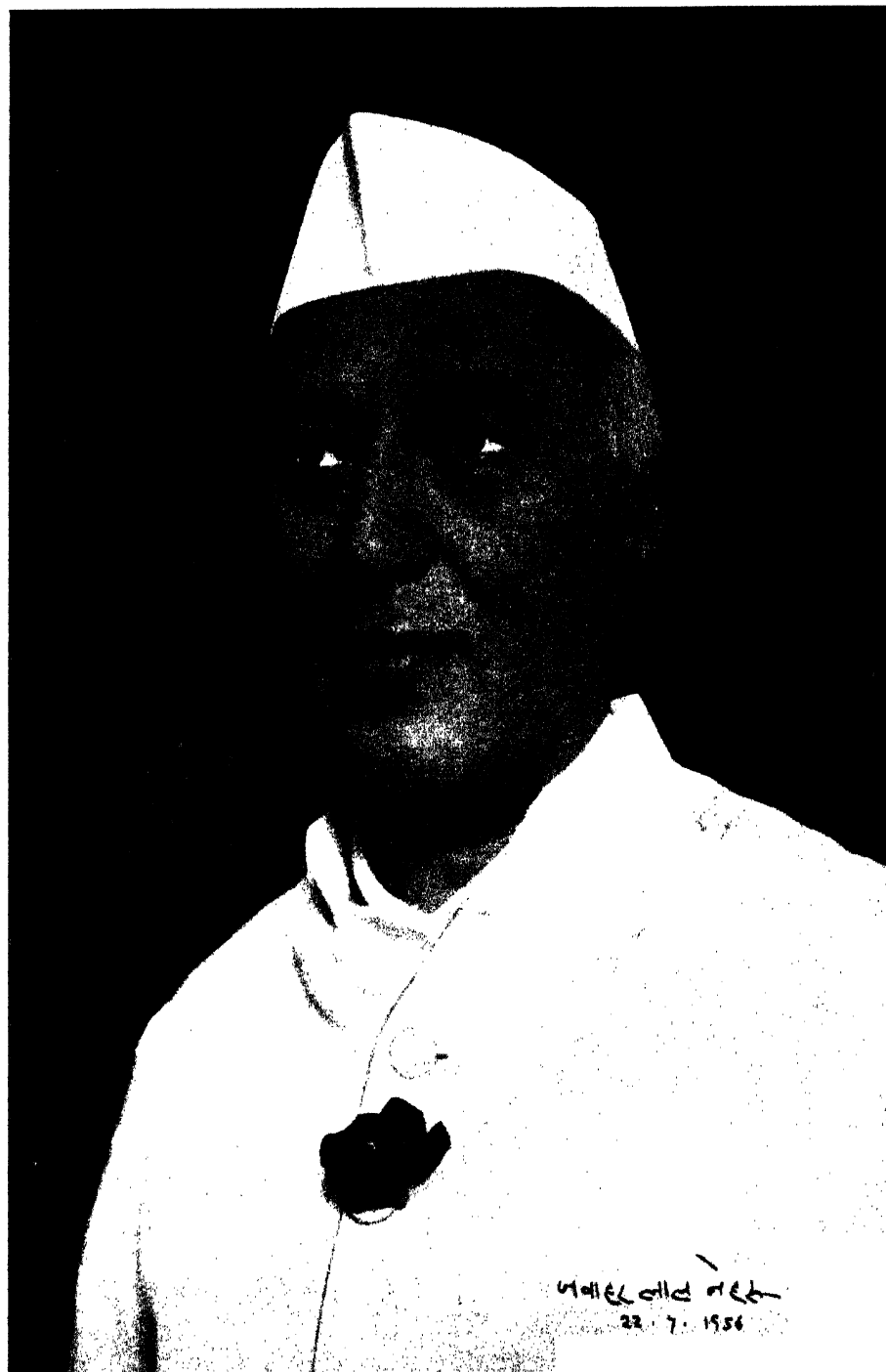
The Nizam, according to his advice, should lose no opportunity of strengthening Hyderabad's position so that he would be better able to stand alone if that was finally found to be advisable. In the meantime, he should be prepared to negotiate at the appropriate moment for the use of a port in Goa, or any port elsewhere, as, for example, on the East Coast. If Pakistan came into existence, there would be more

¹ Cf. Sultan Ahmed, an adviser of the Nizam and a shrewd observer, corroborated these facts in an article written by him in the *Indian Nation*: 'Unfortunately the extreme Muslim opposition, represented by the Ittehad, hardened, and the leading part in this opposition was played by Moin Nawaz Jung and Syed Taquiuddin, Bihari Secretary in the Government of Hyderabad who had been dismissed by Sir Mirza. It was suspected that the opposition was also receiving great financial support from Mir Laiq Ali, brother-in-law of Moin Nawaz Jung', quoted by Sir Mirza Ismail in *My Public Life*, p. 107.

² Ali Yavar Jung, *Hyderabad in Retrospect*, p. 15.



Lord Mountbatten



Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru

than one Union or unit in India, and, in such circumstances, and in view of its size, population and resources, the claim of Hyderabad to form an independent unit could not be denied. If, on the other hand, some form of organic Union is formed for India, it would be in the interest of Hyderabad that the Centre should be weak and be given the least scope compatible with the idea of a federation.¹

The Nawab of Chhatari echoed this advice when he and Sir Walter Monckton placed the views of the Nizam before the Cabinet Mission. Most of the later policies of the Nizam were formulated in the light of this opinion.

All this time the Nizam sat in the King Kothi weaving web upon web of intrigue. He trusted no one. He himself had all the threads of the intrigues in his hands and never allowed either party to know what was happening to the other. He negotiated with Lord Mountbatten through the Nawab of Chhatari and Sir Walter Monckton, and through the latter, he often sounded various leaders of the Conservative Party in England. He had Kasim Razvi on the leash, to create trouble when required. He received the advice of Mir Laik Ali and Moin Nawaz Jung. He encouraged Hosh Yar Jung to outwit Deen Yar Jung and through him kept in touch with Sir Mirza Ismail. Sometimes he asked the advice of Raja Bahadur Aravamudu Ayyangar, an old and respected lawyer and ex-Minister, which however was no more than a gesture. And directly or indirectly, he never ceased to maintain contact with Jinnah.

This was not all. He employed El-Edroos, the Commander-in-Chief of the Army, to negotiate the purchase of arms in Czechoslovakia, while an English knight was occupied in contacting Portugal on his behalf, to open negotiations for the purchase of Goa.

The Mountbatten Plan for effecting a partition of India and transferring power to the two Dominions of India and Pakistan on August 15, 1947, was announced on June 3. By his *firman* of June 11, 1947, said to have been vetted by Mr. Jinnah, the Nizam declared that he was entitled to assume the status of an independent sovereign on August 15, and that he would not be sending representatives to India's Constituent Assembly.

The Indian Independence Bill was introduced in the

¹ Menon, *Integration of Indian States*, p. 63.

British Parliament on 9th July. The Nizam was seriously perturbed by it, and sent a protest to Lord Mountbatten. The British, he said, had forsaken their 'Old Ally'. Without his consent, they had envisaged Hyderabad as a part of one or the other of the Dominions. This was breach of faith. Hyderabad, he insisted, should be a Third Dominion.

Among the British officers who were just as shocked as he was by this decision, was Sir Arthur Lothian, who retired from the office of the Resident of Hyderabad on 26th November, 1946.

In his *Kingdoms of Yesterday* Lothian dwells regretfully upon the glorious era which would have dawned on India, had his wishes been fulfilled. According to him he had loved India; and so no doubt he had, but with that parental solicitude which characterised most of the British bureaucrats who carried the 'White Man's Burden' so bravely in this country. Every one, it seems, loved Lothian in return. Once, to draw upon his own testimony, not less than three of the Nizam's advisers shed tears in his presence at the very prospect of carrying on their duties without him. On another occasion an Indian Prince wept and would not be comforted when faced with the possibility of the British departing from India. It did not strike Sir Arthur that the day when the British would leave India and the States be integrated was looked forward to by the subjects of the Princes as the day of their deliverance.

Sir Arthur Lothian was a great protagonist of Hyderabad as the 'Third Dominion'. It is even possible that he himself had presented the idea to the Nizam in the first place; at any rate, Sir Conrad Corfield, the Adviser to the Crown Representative, was its active sponsor.

If India was to be divided, as seemed certain, its balkanization, according to the British political officers, was the only alternative which would enable the British to continue to bear the 'White Man's Burden.' India therefore should be split into several dominions, loosely woven into a confederacy, each unit to be closely linked with the United Kingdom. It was in this solution that the Nizam saw the chance to fulfil his cherished ambition of becoming independent.

Sir Walter Monckton was the most formidable instrument of the Nizam's policy. An astute diplomat, possessing immense foresight, he played the triple role of a constitutional

adviser, a roving ambassador with close contacts with the leaders of the British Conservative Party and an intimate friend of Lord Mountbatten. To my esteem for his great forensic ability was soon to be added respect for his flair for carrying on negotiations.

By the end of 1945, when coming events had begun to cast their shadow on the political landscape of India, Sir Walter Monckton was engaged in strengthening the position of the Nizam in London and New Delhi and exploring the possibility of an alternative arrangement to Hyderabad's accession to India.

During the time that I was in Hyderabad, I had an impression that Sir Walter had ceased to carry weight with Jinnah.

Naturally, Sir Walter's first concern was with his client's interests which, according to him, lay in some sort of loose association of Hyderabad with the Indian Union, with complete autonomy. He felt that with his influence he could secure the most favourable terms for his client along those lines by wearing out the resistance of the Indian leaders.

So far as I could find, Sir Walter had no personal contacts with any of the Congress leaders; certainly none with Sardar; perhaps they distrusted him.

Till the middle of 1948, when Sir Walter gave up the Nizam's case in despair, he enjoyed the confidence both of the Nizam and of Lord Mountbatten, but for entirely different reasons. The Nizam hoped that on account of his powerful influence over Lord Mountbatten and the leaders of the Conservative Party in Britain, Sir Walter would secure practical independence for Hyderabad. Lord Mountbatten, on the other hand, believed that it was Sir Walter alone who could help him to secure the accession of Hyderabad to India.

The personal diary of Campbell-Johnson pays repeated tribute to Sir Walter's magnificent skill in negotiation. The fact was, however, that Lord Mountbatten had no mental reservations while dealing with him. With the Nizam, on the other hand, unfathomable mental reservation was a congenital gift, and I am sure Sir Walter was aware of that.

CHAPTER V

THE RISE OF KASIM RAZVI

AT this distance of time Kasim Razvi appears like an imaginary hero of some mediaeval romance, but, unfortunately for the people of Hyderabad and for India, he was only too much alive.

Razvi, of the fiery eyes and passionate oratory, was a fanatic with a single-track mind. He believed himself to be a heaven-appointed leader whose mission it was to liberate the Muslims of the Deccan from the Indian Union. But this was only the first step. The next was to be the annexation of the Circars, the east coast districts of the Province of Madras, to Hyderabad. His Muslim crusaders were then to march to Delhi to replant the Asafia flag on the Red Fort of the Moghuls, and never were they to rest till 'the waves of the Bay of Bengal washed the feet of our sovereign'.

He insisted on the right of the Muslims to enslave the Hindu, who was none but a '*kafir*' and 'a worshipper of stone and monkey'; 'who drinks cows' urine and eats cow-dung in the name of religion'; who is 'a barbarian in every sense of the word'. On the other hand, to be a Muslim was to invite danger; 'a Muslim is one who would set at naught all the earthly powers and make the whole world his enemy'.

None became more dangerously intoxicated with these words than the man who uttered them. Within less than a year Razvi had succeeded in becoming an irresistible driving force in Hyderabad, leading even the Nizam to the belief that his cherished aim was almost within his grasp. He had launched insensate attacks against the terror-stricken Hindus of Hyderabad, carried fire and sword to hundreds of harmless and unarmed villages, and at last forced the Government of India to take police action to put an end to his terroristic activities.

The men who were encouraging Razvi to be the spear-head of this wild movement from a safe distance shrewdly banked on various factors. According to them once the standard of Muslim domination of the Deccan was raised, the Muslims of North India would flock to it. The Hindus of the

State, if sufficiently harassed, would cease to look across the boundaries of the State towards their co-religionists in India for help. Eventually, feeling themselves abandoned, they would submit to political slavery by agreeing to a 50 : 50 Muslim-non-Muslim ratio in the legislature and to the divine right of the Nizam, as representing the Muslim community, to be the lord and master of them all.

These men believed that, whatever they chose to do, the Government of India was too unstable and its army too ill-organized to venture on any strong action against Hyderabad and that if the Government began such a venture, the Muslims of India would rise as one man and overthrow it.

In any event, the Hindus of Hyderabad could, in an emergency, serve as hostages. 'If the Indian Union ventures to enter Hyderabad', threatened Razvi, 'the invaders will see the burning everywhere of the bodies of one crore and sixty-five lakhs. We Muslims will not spare others when we ourselves are not allowed to exist.'

During the nine months that I was able to study Razvi and his activities, I never found him to falter on the path he had chosen. Of the miserable crew that brought ruin to Hyderabad, he alone did not seek safety in a flight to Pakistan when the crisis came, or perhaps *could* not.

Under Razvi, the Razakars enveloped themselves in the cloak of holy crusaders. When joining the corps, a Razakar took a solemn pledge to sacrifice his life for the Ittehad and Hyderabad when called upon to do so by 'my leader'. 'In the name of Allah', the pledge ran, 'I do hereby promise to fight to the last to maintain the supremacy of the Muslim power in the Deccan.'

In January, 1948, when I went to Hyderabad, more than thirty thousand volunteers—men, women and children—were on the rolls of the corps. By July-August, 1948, over a hundred thousand had been enrolled. The target was five times that number.

The activities of the Razakars were varied. They held demonstrations in Hyderabad and other towns in the districts, denouncing all who opposed them in violent terms. They harassed individuals who favoured accession to the Union or responsible government in the State. They overawed the public by staging marches on foot or cycles, in buses or lorries. While

on the march they brandished spears and swords and sometimes fired blank shots in the air.

With or without the co-operation of the Nizam's police, the Razakars took punitive action against villages on pretexts which ranged from the misdeeds of individuals to a raid by a few Communists or a well-engineered mud-throwing at a mosque by an agent provocateur. With the aid of the police again they raided border villages in the Union in order to pursue a victim, or to inflict reprisals for the act of some unknown suspect.

The Razakars ran a school of espionage and propaganda. Some of the trainees, in the guise of Brahman priests, would encourage the Hindus of a village to inflict injury on a local mosque. This would infuriate the local Muslims. The Razakars would then fly to their rescue, injure or kill leading villagers, and plunder and burn their houses.

The Razakars also infiltrated in various guises the territory of the Indian Union, and established a network of agents to smuggle arms and recruit Muslim volunteers for the State Police or the army. Some of the more adventurous spirits among them also spread out in different parts of the country to rouse Muslim feeling against the Union and to encourage an exodus to Hyderabad. It was hoped that in this way the communal ratio of the State would be substantially altered.

The Ittehad leaders maintained that the Razakar movement was the spontaneous expression of the unwillingness of the Muslims of Hyderabad to accede to the Union. This view, sedulously propagated, was intended for consumption in New Delhi and abroad. No one, however, was prepared to swallow it unless he happened to be biassed against India.

The Razakars had almost unlimited means at their disposal, and who but the Nizam's Government could have built them up? They used several three-ton lorries and dozens of jeeps and one-ton trucks. They demanded free transport from the Nizam's State Railway and the Road Transport Service of the State and in spite of petrol being in short supply, had plentiful supplies from the Government depots.

The Nizam's Government obligingly disarmed the Hindus in village after village. The arms so recovered were used by the Razakars. Later, they were also found using old firearms supplied by the Nizam's Government. Later still, they used

modern weapons, smuggled into the State by Sydney Cotton, the aerial gun-runner.

The Ittehad had a good publicity machine at its disposal in its psychological war against India. During the year 1948, it conducted seven daily and six weekly papers in Urdu and the Nizam's Radio was at their service. Day after day they published or broadcast attacks against the Union and often against Panditji, Sardar or myself. In the publicity campaign, the speeches of Razvi appeared prominently and frequently. Anti-Indian news items from the Pakistan Radio or newspapers describing the imaginary discomfiture of the Indian army on the Kashmir Front were also served up for the benefit of the gullible Muslim public of the State.

The headquarters of the Razakars were situated, ironically enough, at Dar-u-Salam, the Abode of Peace. Razvi lived and worked there, controlling fifty-two centres in the State, each under an administrative commander. At these centres the Razakars were recruited and given training in drill and musketry by retired soldiers; at a few centres, even men serving in the army and the police helped.

Nawab Deen Yar Jung, the Police Commissioner, a trusted man of the Nizam, enjoyed the reputation of being a staunch supporter of Razvi and had considerable influence over him. The brains-trust of the Ittehad, which at the time consisted of Moin Nawaz Jung and Syed Taqi-ud-Din, with Mir Laik Ali as financier, was thirsting for the blood of Sir Mirza and began to exert its influence, on the Nizam particularly, through Deen Yar Jung.

The men who constituted the brains-trust of the Ittehad thought that Razvi was their man. Razvi returned the compliment; he believed them to be his tools.

By 1946, the Ittehad had given up its proselytizing activity, but the Nizam's Government continued to give large grants to mosques, which, in one form or another, went towards decoying helpless Hindus into Islam. Where this could not be done, the thumb-screw of coercion was applied, though care was taken not to rouse the Hindu community to violent opposition.

The poor Harijans in the villages found it hard to resist such temptation or pressure and I came across some very odd cases of conversion among them. A starving Harijan family would permit one of its members to turn Muslim to earn his

reward, while the rest of the family, including the convert's wife, would remain Hindu.

The situation in such families was sometimes full of humour. The converted husband would sit for his meals apart from the family in beard and fez and would be served by his wife from a distance. The convert might be the father of her children, but that made no difference; the wife was a Hindu and remained one; he was only a Muslim for convenience.

When the pressure was relaxed the converted generally reverted to their ancestral religion.

The Deendars, however, remained active proselytizers, though, by January, 1948, their influence had become limited.

The head of this religious sect styled himself 'Hazarat Maulana Siddiq Deendar Channa Basaweswar Qible'. He posed as the *avatar* of Channa Basaweswar, the ancient founder of the Lingayat sect of the Hindus and claimed to have the same divine marks on his body as that saint.

Four of Siddiq's lieutenants also declared themselves to be the Hindu divinities, Vyas, Sri Krishna, Narasimha and Veerabhadra. Of course the Nizam had a secure place in the pantheon; he was Dharmaraja, the god of righteousness of the Hindu scriptures.

Siddiq had his headquarters in Hyderabad. His followers, reckoned to be five hundred strong, had no ostensible means of livelihood. They wore the green turban of Muslim divines, the saffron robe of Hindu *sadhus* and beard in the style of the Sikhs. When the situation in a village grew tense, they led the Muslims against the Hindus. When they set out to loot the possessions of the Hindus, they dressed as Razakars.

The exploits of Siddiq were reminiscent of a forgotten age. At one time he even started to collect an army for the purpose of capturing Hampi, the ruins of the capital of the vanished empire of Vijayanagar, to recover its buried treasure.

His attacks on the Hindus were characterised by neither taste nor self-restraint. In the religious literature of the Deendars, Siddiq was represented as shooting lions, tigers, leopards and foxes, all of which had the shape of Sikhs, Hindus, Christians and Lingayats. One of their books, *Awanul-Nas*, contained the following exhortation:—

My Muslim brethren! The *Qoran* has taught you only one thing: that is, to change the country in which you live into Pakistan; in other words, to compel others to drink of the

waters of the Qoran-e-Majid. A bowl containing one-quarter milk and three-quarters dung cannot be called clean. Whether it is Arabistan, or Turkestan or Afghanistan, so long as it contains Kafiristan in its territory, it cannot be called Pakistan.

Siddiq began to pursue his proselytizing activities vigorously. He also declared a *jehad* (a religious war) against the shrines of the Hindus and issued a public appeal for one lakh volunteers and a loan of Rs. 5,00,000 for the purpose. No step was taken by the authorities against him. The Hindus, thereupon, on January 10, 1932, submitted a petition to the Nizam to check his activities. When the opposition became too strong, the Nizam's Government imposed some kind of restriction on Siddiq's activities, but till 1948 he continued to function, though on a very limited scale. The Nizam's Government then imposed some restriction on his activities.

Because he claimed to be a reincarnated Hindu saint, Siddiq was thoroughly disliked by the fanatic Razvi, who also considered him a potential rival. Meanwhile, although the Razakars looked upon the Deendars with contempt, they tolerated them as convenient allies for the terrorisation of the Hindus.

CHAPTER VI

SARDAR'S CHESS BOARD

THE central figure of the drama which was being enacted in India during the year 1946-47 was the indomitable Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel, the Deputy Prime Minister and the Minister of Home, States and Information.

Before August 1947, the composite Government of India consisted of the Congress and the Muslim League representatives. It was a divided house. Sardar had, therefore, to carry on interminable manoeuvres in order that the Congress wing was not outwitted. After August, the whole structure of Government had to be re-built both at the Centre and in the Provinces, a process which equally tested his statesmanship.

The communal conflicts in several parts of North India following the Partition, had seriously affected internal order in the country. It had to be restored and that too with the help of the attenuated services and the disorganised police and military forces. Refugees, in tens of thousands, were pouring into India from Pakistan and raising tremendous problems of accommodation as also of the maintenance of order. The post-Partition problems involved the division of assets and liabilities between the newly formed countries and the separation of forces and stores and other cognate matters. All these problems required to be handled with tact, vigour and firmness. It was Sardar who bore the burden which they imposed.

The situation was complicated by the stand taken by a large group of Muslims in India in favour of Pakistan. To Sardar, this was high treason. He made no secret of his view that the Muslims who were disloyal to India had no place in it. He said on several occasions that they should cross over to the country to which they were expressing loyalty. In one of his speeches he said:

There are four-and-a half crores of Muslims in India, many of whom helped the creation of Pakistan. How can one believe that they will change overnight? The Muslims say that they are loyal citizens and therefore why should anybody doubt their *bona fides*? To them, I would say: 'Why do you ask us? Search your own conscience'.¹

¹ P. D. Saggi, *Life & Work of Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel*, p. 54.

On another occasion he said:

I want to ask the Indian Muslims only one question. In the recent All-India Muslim Conference, why did you not open your mouth on the Kashmir issue? Why did you not condemn the action of Pakistan?

These things create doubt in the minds of the people. So I want to say a word as a friend of Muslims as it is the duty of a good friend to speak frankly. It is your duty now to sail in the same boat and sink or swim together. I want to tell you very clearly that you cannot ride two horses. You select one horse, whichever you like best.

In the Constituent Assembly, one of the Lucknow Muslim Leaguers pleaded for separate electorates and reservation of seats. I had to open my mouth and say that he could not have it both ways. Now he is in Pakistan. Those who want to go to Pakistan can go there and live in peace. Let us live here in peace and work for ourselves.¹

Immediately after Partition, the relations of India and Pakistan were very strained. Pakistan, Sardar felt, was virtually at war with India; he therefore tried to prevent the transfer of further defence stores to that country. It was also at his instance that the Government of India withheld the payment of the Rs. 55 crores payable to Pakistan under the Partition arrangements.

Gandhiji, however, went on a fast on the issue of payment of this sum and had the decision of the Government of India reversed.

There were open differences between Panditji and Sardar; and so there were between him and Gandhiji. At the very moment of triumph the ship which they were steering was on the rocks. This made Sardar's task extremely difficult.

From about the middle of 1946, when the policy of transfer of power to Indian hands was being canvassed, Sir Conrad Corfield, the Political Adviser of the Crown Representative, was, after Mr. Jinnah, the biggest headache of the Congress. He was then doing his best to organise the Indian Princes into a Third Force for collective bargaining with the Dominion of India.

The astute Nawab of Bhopal was his ally. He put forward a new doctrine of collective sovereignty of the Princes. No prince could accede to the Indian Dominion without the consent of the Chancellor of the Chamber of Princes; in other

¹ P. D. Saggi, *Life & Work of Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel*, p. 62.

words, himself. And all his sympathies were against the Congress.

The Jam Saheb of Nawanagar, besides the Nawab of Bhopal, was the only ruler with any considerable degree of influence over a section of the Princes. He had been hostile to Sardar and distrustful of his policies since the Rajkot episode of 1938-39. He was, therefore, consolidating his position with the other Princes of Kathiawad for negotiating with the British or with Sardar from a position of strength.

All this suited those British officials who wanted to sabotage the plan of the Labour Government of the U. K. If India was to be independent, at least a part of it must be left sufficiently weak to render the British hold indispensable.

While Sardar was spreading his net, the Negotiating Committee of the Constituent Assembly came to an arrangement with the Negotiating Committee of the Chamber of Princes. As a result, the Maharajas of Baroda, Bikaner, Cochin, Jaipur, Jodhpur, Patiala, Rewa and Udaipur decided to send their representatives to it in April 1947.

Sardar decided to deal with the other Princes separately.

The influence and the guiding hand of Sardar were felt throughout this period in the various moves which ultimately integrated Hyderabad with India. I do not know whether he could have expressed himself in the devout words which Bismark once used:

A statesman cannot create anything himself. He must wait and listen until he hears the steps of God sounding through events; then leap out and grasp the hem of his garment.

Anyway Sardar was all the time waiting and listening, if not to the steps of God, at least to the crashing of events. At no time would it have been true to say that Sardar was content to take a back seat in the protracted and tortuous negotiations which were being carried on with the Nizam, Laik Ali and other representatives of the Ittehad.

In 1947 Sardar was confronted with the same situation which faced Bismark on the eve of the North German Confederation in 1862. The hostile forces that he had to meet already existed and the master weapon in his hands, as in the case of the German Chancellor, was the popular will to unity. The fate of the Princes—of those who accepted Sardar's advice voluntarily and out of a sense of patriotism, or of others

who misguidedly thought that they could defeat the destiny of India—was already predetermined.

When Sardar took charge of the newly formed Ministry of States, most of the Princes had ranged themselves against the consolidation of the country. Immediately on assuming his new office, Sardar expressed his views on what the future relations between the Union and the States should be:—

Now that British rule is ending, the demand has been made that the States should regain their independence. In so far as Paramountcy embodied the submission of States to foreign will, I have every sympathy with this demand, but I do not think it can be their desire to utilise this freedom from domination in a manner which is injurious to the common interest of India or which militates against the ultimate Paramountcy or popular interests and welfare which might result in the abandonment of that mutually useful relationship that has developed between British India and Indian States during the last century.¹

The British Cabinet also played fair and Lord Mountbatten was extremely helpful. Sardar was swift and irresistible and V. P. Menon was deftness itself. The Princes had little power to combine as their own people did not want them and many felt lost without a protecting power.

How the States came to be integrated is a matter of history which has recently been narrated by Sri V. P. Menon in his *Story of the Integration of Indian States*. But in all the endless negotiations and manoeuvres—and I was in touch with some of them—the uncanny statesmanship of Sardar provided the directing force. There were times when everything looked as if Indian unity would never come into being, but Sardar led or drove every Prince towards the integration of the States with the Union with the relentless inevitability of fate.

Amongst the progressive Indian statesmen associated with the Princes, Sir B. L. Mitter, the Prime Minister of the Gaekwad of Baroda, who was in close touch with Sardar, was the first to take a bold stand. To Sir Conrad Corfield, who wanted to carry on negotiations with the Congress on behalf of the Indian Princes as an 'honest broker', he retorted, 'we want no brokers, honest or dishonest.'

Sir V. T. Krishnamachari, the Prime Minister of Jaipur, was the most clear-sighted of the Prime Ministers of the States and he ably seconded the efforts of V. P. Menon to secure the accession of the States.

¹ P. D. Saggi, *Life & Work of Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel*, p. 34.

I had had friendly or professional relations with several of the Princes and was in touch with them throughout. The Maharaja of Bikaner had consulted me with regard to the establishment of responsible government in his State. Supported by his Prime Minister—Sardar K. M. Panikkar—he was one of the Princes to agree to accession at once. On one occasion he told me that he had promised Lord Mountbatten to do his bit. Later, however, when Bikaner was integrated with Rajasthan, he was dissatisfied.

In 1946, under my professional advice, the Rulers of the Deccan States decided to form a Union. If I am right, I first coined the word 'Rajpramukh' for their Constitution which I drafted.

Since 1944 I was closely associated with the late Maharana Sir Bhupal Singh Bahadur of Udaipur and the Maharaja of Panna in a scheme for establishing a university at Chittod. The Maharana also took my advice on constitutional matters, and early in 1947 I accepted his invitation to be his Honorary Constitutional Adviser. I also drafted the new Constitution of Udaipur for him which, incidentally, brought fundamental rights, universal franchise and parliamentary sovereignty into legal operation for the first time in India.

At times Sardar had to deal with a highly treacherous situation demanding the utmost dexterity. The Maharajkumar of Jaisalmer was one of the covenanting party to the Union of Rajasthan, which I had helped to set up. His great fear was that he would not be able to defend his State in case Pakistan, which was contiguous, took possession of it. I took him to Gandhiji as well as to Sardar, both of whom gave him assurances.

The Maharajkumar was, however, induced by the Maharaja of Jodhpur, to accompany him to see Mr. Jinnah. The architect of Pakistan was anxious to carve out a Pakistan enclave which would cleave India in the West. He had, therefore, offered tempting terms to the Maharaja of Jodhpur.

The Nawab of Bhopal was one of those rulers who wanted to stand out of accession to India, claiming that he would not join either Dominion. In fact, his sympathies were all for Pakistan. The Maharaja of Jodhpur who was under his influence, against the advice of Sri C. S. Venkatachar, I.C.S., who was then his Prime Minister, approached the Maharajas of Baroda and Udaipur to join him in acceding to Pakistan, so that

it might extend right across through Jodhpur, Udaipur, Indore, Bhopal and Baroda. Messengers went to and fro. Hurried consultations were held. Menon describes his interview with the Maharaja at the time when the latter whipped out a revolver and threatened to kill him. Anyway, the move of Pakistan was ultimately frustrated.¹

When the Maharaja of Udaipur received the invitation to enter into his arrangement with H. H. the Maharaja of Jodhpur and other Princes, this descendant of Rana Pratap replied, 'My choice was made by my ancestors. If they had faltered, they would have left us a kingdom as large as Hyderabad. They did not; neither shall I. I am with India.'

The next day his agent telephoned to me at Delhi to ask whether I approved of his reply. I replied that I not only approved, but was filled with admiration for it. Nothing nobler could have been said by Rana Pratap's descendant, and this, too, on the eve of the possible extinction of his fifteen-hundred year old dynastic rule.

When the Jam Saheb of Nawanagar, on the advice of Mr. Jayakar, was trying to promote a Union of some of the Princes, the Maharaja of Panna and one or two other Princes had a meeting at my residence in Bombay. We came to the conclusion that a Union of Rajasthan should be promoted with the Maharana of Udaipur as the Rajpramukh.

The idea was put in practice at Udaipur where I helped in forming the Union of the Rajasthan States, other than Jaipur, Jodhpur, Bikaner, Bharatpur and Dholpur. This Union, which was formed under the leadership of the Maharana of Udaipur and the Maharajas of Panna, Kotah, Dungarpur, Bundi and Jaisalmer, also included several States of Saurashtra. A minister was appointed and the Abu office of the British Resident of Rajasthan was taken charge of by one of the federating States. A little after its birth, however, the Union was replaced by the greater Rajasthan Union formed by the Sardar.

In the beginning, the Maharaja of Jammu and Kashmir, though his leanings were towards India, found it difficult to make a choice between India and Pakistan. He, therefore, postponed the decision to accede to one of the two dominions. He wanted the situation and the relations between the two Dominions to become stabilised before he made his final

¹ Menon, *Integration of States*, p. 170.

decision. In the interval, however, he was desirous of coming to a Standstill Agreement with both India and Pakistan. In this connection he was prompted solely by the interest of his own State which was geographically linked with both the Dominions.

Pakistan readily agreed to the Maharaja's suggestion and signed the Standstill Agreement. If implemented, it would have given Pakistan a legitimate foot-hold in the valley which later might be enlarged gradually, or, at an appropriate moment, converted into a military occupation. India, on the other hand, could not agree to this course; the communications between the territory of the newly-formed Dominion of India and Kashmir were far from easy and any such agreement would only remain on paper.

The position remained in this fluid stage till 22nd October 1947. Then the tribal raids, sponsored or supported by Pakistan, left no choice to the Maharaja but to seek India's aid in safeguarding not only the integrity but the very existence of Kashmir.

India, however, would not go to the Maharaja's aid without formal accession. In the result, he signed an Instrument of Accession. India went to the rescue of Kashmir. Pakistan's aggression was arrested.

The Nawab of Junagadh, on the other hand, resisted the compulsion of the geographical, cultural and political affinities which bound his State to India. Contrary to the promise given by him to his brother Princes of Kathiawad (Saurashtra) and disregarding the economic interests of his people, he acceded to Pakistan.

In October the people of the State rose in revolt against the Nawab. Thereupon he fled to Pakistan, taking with him all his cash, securities, Begums, children and dogs. The *Arzi Hakumat*, Provisional Government, was set up by some leaders of Junagadh according to a declaration which happened to be drafted by me. Wherever its volunteers went, the people rose in their support, the officers of the Nawab fled and the *Arzi Hakumat* entered in occupation. On November 9, the Dewan, Sir Shah Nawaz Bhutto, a nominee of Pakistan, unable to carry on the Government any further without popular support, invited the Indian Government to take charge of the State.

The formidable Sir C. P. Ramaswami Aiyar was at that time the Prime Minister of Travancore. On June 11, he announced that Travancore had decided to be an independent sovereign State from the date of the transfer of power. This announcement, made by a man of outstanding position in public life, on behalf of perhaps the oldest State in India, whose Rulers ruled the State in the name and on behalf of their tutelary deity, Sri Padmanabha, came to the country as a veritable bombshell. His subsequent announcement to appoint a Trade Agent in Pakistan roused bitter resentment.

I had known Sir C. P. Ramaswami Aiyar since 1915-16 when we were working together in the Home Rule League: he was not only a patriot, but one of the most farseeing Hindu statesmen. His attitude came to me also as a rude shock. Perhaps some day we might be able to find out what led him to make that statement.

Sir C. P.'s intransigence gave a new ray of hope to those Princes who had been dreaming of evolving a 'Third Force' out of the States. In the words of Ali Yavar Jung, 'they were looking to the wizard of Travancore who at least had a sea-board for the export of his cocoanuts and uranium.'¹

I was present at a lunch at Birla House after which Sardar had a long conversation with Sir C. P. Ramaswami Aiyar. We were left in no doubt that it had proved infructuous. Sardar, to say the least, was furious and determined, if necessary, to deal severely with Travancore. Sir C. P., in his interviews with the Viceroy, however, was less adamant. After a further interview with Lord Mountbatten, writes V. P. Menon, 'he (Sir C. P.) agreed that accession was inevitable.'

Then there were dramatic developments. Sir C. P. returned to Travancore. The Maharaja signed the Instrument of Accession and the Standstill Agreement. Within a few hours, if I remember aright, Sir C. P. was attacked with a knife. He was wounded and resigned soon after.

There was an interesting postscript to this episode. Sir C. P. had come to Delhi some time after leaving Travancore. Sardar invited him to lunch and in the invitation wrote: 'It is my nature to be a friend of the friendless.' Not to be outdone, Sir C. P. replied that the 'friendless' person had an engagement with a friend for lunch on that day. (He was

¹ Ali Yavar Jung, *Hyderabad in Retrospect*, p. 18.

having lunch with Lord Mountbatten.) Sir C. P. ended his reply on an optimistic note: 'Hoping for better luck next time.'

Many of the Princes were still wavering; they were frightened of accession, but more frightened of their own people, if they did not accede. They wanted the protection of the Indian Union, as they had enjoyed that of the British Government, to save them against the aspirations of the people. At the same time, they hoped, by some device, to be more independent than what they were even under the British.

When the Princes came to Delhi for a meeting convened by the States Ministry of the Government of India, Sardar, by a supreme tactical manoeuvre, allowed Lord Mountbatten to become the spokesman of his policy. He knew that the Princes, with their habitual loyalty towards the British Crown, would give greater weight to the advice of the Crown Representative. In fact, it is doubtful if Sardar could have achieved all that he did so swiftly and peacefully without the active support of Lord Mountbatten; for, it was his attitude which convinced the Princes that they could get no help at all from the British Government.

Before the conference actually met on July 25, however, Sardar, by himself or through V. P. Menon, had secured the consent of many rulers of importance. Nevertheless, the back of the Princely resistance was not finally broken until, after a frank discussion at a private luncheon, the Jam Saheb and Her Highness the Maharani of Nawanagar agreed to accept Sardar's policy.

By December, 1947, the rulers of Eastern States and Chhattisgarh had surrendered their sovereignty, so that their States might be merged with the neighbouring Indian Provinces.

At the time, in view of the differences that had arisen, Sardar had made up his mind to leave the Cabinet, but he wanted to consolidate Saurashtra before he left. By the middle of the month, therefore, V. P. Menon was commissioned to go to Saurashtra to finalise its integration. This proved a difficult matter as Saurashtra had the largest number of single States in the country and their diversity was baffling. The Sardar therefore visited Bombay and Ahmedabad to be near enough to handle the situation if need arose.

CHAPTER VII

THE CHHATARI DELEGATION

BOTH Lord Mountbatten and Sardar Patel were forceful personalities. From their respective points of view, both were anxious to solve the problem of Hyderabad as rapidly as possible; both were convinced that it must come to India, and all concerned naturally wanted to avoid a conflict, unless it was thrust upon them.

From the beginning, however, Sardar knew that the Nizam was going to stand out and a show-down would be inevitable. He was also fully conscious that Lord Mountbatten would strive his utmost to prevent it. Yet, the negotiations were left in his hands for Sardar had the fullest confidence in his sincerity.

Sardar also had reasons to be grateful to Lord Mountbatten for all that he had done in securing the integration of the country. Lord Mountbatten's association with the negotiations had given a wider justification to all that was done in India than might have been possible if it had been dealt with purely on a domestic level.

The negotiations with Hyderabad were also more delicate than with other States, as they involved both communal and international repercussions. That Lord Mountbatten should be handling them was, therefore, a sure guarantee to satisfy the outside world that the approach to the problem was not inspired by any communal consideration, but dictated solely in the national interests.

In particular, Sardar wanted to avoid any charge of forcing the pace in respect of a Muslim Prince of the eminence of the Nizam. He also knew that Sir Walter Monckton's relations with Lord Mountbatten might make the negotiations easier.

Sardar's hands at the time were full of many other important matters and he did not mind if the negotiations dragged along for a little while. So he played chess with patience and skill. Besides V. P. Menon, whose personal relations often made it difficult for him to resist the over-optimistic Governor-General, he had C. C. Desai, Additional Secretary of States at New Delhi and later, at Hyderabad, myself, who happened to be in his personal confidence.

So far as I could find, Sardar felt that having regard to the circumstances in which the country was placed, a beginning had to be made to associate Hyderabad with India even on minimum terms acceptable to the Nizam so long as the people had some voice in its governance. Once Hyderabad was within the orbit of Free India, he was sure that the people of Hyderabad could be relied upon to assert themselves. Popular Government, however limited in scope, would make closer association on the lines desired inevitable. To this end he welcomed the assistance of Lord Mountbatten. In doing so, he took the risk of being forced to a compromise with some of his basic ideals on the subject.

At the same time, Lord Mountbatten was scrupulously correct, never failing to obtain the consent of Sardar to all his moves. But many times, Sardar agreed to the concessions given to the Nizam unwillingly, or with the knowledge—for I took pains to keep him posted—that the concessions were not likely to be accepted.

Though Lord Mountbatten did his utmost to bring the Nizam round to an acceding frame of mind, the Nizam and his advisers were left under the impression that, given patience and Sir Walter's skill and influence, Hyderabad could keep its independence, if not in form, certainly in substance.

As stated by a verbal device in the Indian Independence Act, the British Parliament had satisfied its conscience by releasing the Indian Princes from their allegiance to the British Crown. It ignored the weighty considerations that had driven its Governors-General for over a century to unify India by coercion or diplomacy and by making and breaking treaties. However, following the policy of the moment, Lord Mountbatten had repeatedly pledged himself not to be a party to the Nizam's accession to India by means other than gentle persuasion.

Sir Walter Monckton never lost an opportunity of impressing upon Lord Mountbatten that no pressure should be exerted on the Nizam to give up his sovereignty. In one of his letters to the Nizam he wrote:

He (Lord Mountbatten) had hitherto been a little afraid on this score (publicising the negotiations) and never liked the idea of the publication of the brochure which he knew we were preparing, because I often used the fact of our intention to publish the brochure as an argument to make the Dominion of India cautious in their attitude towards the State.

The Nizam and his advisers, from their own point of view, therefore exploited fully some of the different reasons that impelled Sardar to take Lord Mountbatten's assistance. They believed—and not wrongly—that Lord Mountbatten was their best guarantee against any positive action that could be taken by the Government of India against Hyderabad. In spite of this, if they failed, it was because they were the victims of exuberant communal passions. Lacking realism, they were unable to sense the importance of the time and the atmosphere, as also of the value of Lord Mountbatten's presence in India.

In these negotiations the fate of India therefore hung upon the persuasive skill of Lord Mountbatten, which was expected to tame such an inveterate lover of autocratic power and Islamic domination as the Nizam. Both he and Sir Walter were emotionally unaware, that to allow Hyderabad to remain autonomous would be the end of India. Not only the compulsion of geography, to use Lord Mountbatten's words, but the compulsion of history, language, culture, ethnic homogeneity and of political unity, made Hyderabad an indissoluble part of India.

Campbell-Johnson refers to Lord Mountbatten's views at this time in the following words:—

During Ismay's and my visit to London, Mountbatten used all his resources as a conciliator to find the formula that would close the gap between accession and association. He even went so far as to recommend a lavish document—a hand-written vellum scroll, perhaps—with a heading confined to some such archaism as 'Know all men by these presents.' It could then be accepted by both parties as an 'instrument', without suffix or prefix, but meaning accession to the Sardar and association to His Exalted Highness!¹

Did the author expect us to believe that Lord Mountbatten had such a poor opinion of the realism with which Sardar and the advisers of the Nizam, if not the Nizam himself, were endowed?

Lord Mountbatten, however, was anxious to secure some kind of agreement with Hyderabad before he left India. Mir Laik Ali and Moin Nawaz knew of his anxiety and therefore remained under the impression that he would accept any arrangement rather than permit a breakdown.

The Nizam decided to open negotiations with India for a treaty on the basis of independence, not accession. At the

¹ *Mission with Mountbatten*, p. 231.

beginning of July, he sent a delegation consisting of the Nawab of Chhatari, his Prime Minister, Sir Walter Monckton and Nawab Ali Yavar Jung, the then Minister for Constitutional Affairs, to negotiate with the Government of India. Kasim Razvi also accompanied the Chhatari Delegation.

When in Delhi, they sought the advice of Mr. Jinnah. I can easily imagine the interview. My old friend and political leader of the Home Rule League days, would be sitting cross-legged, wrapt in detached majesty, his hand playing with his monocle. The others would be sitting in respectful silence. Soon, as was usual with Mr. Jinnah, he would deliver in his jerky manner and with authoritarian gestures, a homily on what every one should do.

It appears that on this occasion the architect of Pakistan expressed the hope that if pressure was brought to bear on Hyderabad, it should, like the great martyr, Imam Husain, immolate itself rather than sacrifice its independence.

He expressed the view that responsible Government could not be introduced in Indian States all at once. It required a political experience and training which was lacking in the people of the States. There could be no doubt that some time would be required before responsible Government could be introduced. A beginning had, however, to be made. It was the duty of the administrators to take the people into their confidence. But the progress towards responsible Government should be speedy.

The Nawab of Chhatari appears to have brought Mr. Jinnah down to earth by asking a very pertinent question: 'Would Pakistan come to the help of Hyderabad if it was faced by an ultimatum from India?'

'No,' said Mr. Jinnah as emphatically as ever. 'Pakistan cannot help Hyderabad with material aid.'¹

On July 25, Lord Mountbatten, by his famous Address to the Chamber of Princes, invited the Princes of India to accede to the Indian Union. By then some of the leading Princes, led by the Maharajas of Nawanagar, Baroda, Mysore, Bikaner, Gwalior and Patiala, had agreed to accede on the basis that Foreign Affairs, Defence and Communications should be transferred to the Union. The last day for signing the Instrument of Accession was fixed for August 15. Meanwhile,

¹ Ali Yavar Jung, *Hyderabad in Retrospect*, p. 19.

Lord Mountbatten formed a negotiating committee comprising various Princes and the Prime Ministers of some of the States. The Nawab of Chhatari however declined to join the negotiating committee and the negotiations with Hyderabad were suspended.

Razvi felt that the cold reception given by Mr. Jinnah would unnerve the Ittehad and the Nizam. With characteristic energy, therefore, he turned the tables on the negotiators. He returned to Hyderabad and publicly denounced the majority members of the delegation as a set of traitors. The Nawab of Chhatari was a traitor because he had a zamindari in U.P.; Ali Yavar Jung, because he was a stooge of Nehru and Patel; Sir Walter Monckton, because he was a friend of Lord Mountbatten. Only Pingle Venkatarama Reddi and Mr. Rahim were staunch and true and saved the situation; they had prevented a betrayal of Hyderabad by refusing to allow a letter to be sent to Lord Mountbatten conceding Defence and External Affairs.

That letter, as it happened, had been approved by the Nizam. The usual allegation was thereupon put forward that the letter which the Nawab of Chhatari was going to send to the Governor-General was not the one which had been approved by the Nizam.

On August 5, the members of the Chhatari Delegation returned to Hyderabad to confront an angry Nizam and a Muslim public denouncing them as traitors.

The Indian Princes had betrayed them, said the Nizam; he had therefore decided to fall back on the British assurance that he would be allowed to associate himself with the United Kingdom directly rather than forced to join either of the two Unions. The ardent Ittehad Minister, Abdul Rahim, and Mein Nawaz Jung now advised him to proceed on the basis of *de facto* independence.

The Nawab of Chhatari in his mild way tried to show up the Ittehad. When the Ittehad leaders talked of making preparations to fight India, he again approached Mr. Jinnah to inquire whether he could spare any arms for Hyderabad. 'Not a gun,' replied the Qaid-e-Azam. Arms were however necessary and the pro-Ittehad ministers induced the Nawab of Chhatari to send General El Edroos, the Commander of the Hyderabad Army, to Europe to arrange for their supply.

Nawab Ali Yavar Jung was also asked to proceed to the U.K. and the U.S.A.—of course in company with Laik Ali—to conclude a defensive alliance with them. He was shrewd enough not to undertake the work and resigned office. With his resignation began a drive to get highly placed *Shia* officers to retire from the services, for the Ittehad was dominated by the *Sunnis*.¹

On the night of August 14, at a farewell banquet given to the last of the British Residents, the Nizam said:

It is still my desire and the desire of Hyderabad to remain within the Family of Nations known as the British Commonwealth... After all these years of friendship, I am confident that the ties which bind Hyderabad to Great Britain will not be severed.

In his reply, Mr. Herbert, the out-going Resident, reflected the mood of the Political Department when he said:

. . . I join with Your Exalted Highness in the hope that a new relationship between them (Hyderabad and Great Britain) may soon be created and may prove as enduring as that which is passing away.²

According to a guest who was present on this occasion, the Resident also uttered a prophecy that as New Delhi was likely to collapse in no time, he would be back in a few months. The Nizam also wound up by saying: 'When the British go from India, I shall become an independent sovereign.'

The Resident did not rest content with words. Most of the Residency files were destroyed and three military barracks—two in Secunderabad and one in Aurangabad—were handed over to the Nizam's Government. The Hyderabad Residency and considerable military equipment belonging to the Government of India were handed over to the Nizam's Government either for an inadequate price or none. The Hakimpeth Aerodrome was similarly given up.

¹ Ali Yavar Jung, *Hyderabad in Retrospect*, p. 22.

² *Hyderabad's Relations with the Dominion of India* (published by the Nizam's Government), pp. 8, 9.

CHAPTER VIII

RAZVI WINS

WHEN by his *Firman* of June 11, 1947, the Nizam declared his intention of assuming the status of an independent sovereign on August 15, the State Congress decided to launch what was known as the Accession *Satyagraha* 'to realise responsible Government integrated to the Indian Union.'

On June 15, Razvi, by way of challenge to the Congress, announced what was already an accomplished fact, that the Razakars were an armed volunteer corps and that Hyderabad would be independent as from August 15. He also called upon the Muslims to prepare themselves for all sacrifices.

On June 19, Kasim Razvi laid down in a public speech that 'To object to the *Firman*, the Royal Declaration, is against loyalty. One has only the right to analyse the *Firmans*. It is the natural right of Hyderabad to declare independence and Paramountcy rests with the Muslims.'

Naturally, these challenges and counter-challenges were followed by clashes between the armed Razakars and the unarmed Congress workers. The Nizam's Government was a silent but appreciative spectator, for the clashes invariably ended in favour of the Razakars.

On July 27, the Ittehad celebrated Independence Day in Hyderabad City. On August 7, under the leadership of the State Congress, 'Join the Indian Union' day was celebrated at 345 centres in the State. During these celebrations 180 persons were arrested and crowds were lathi-charged at several places. Swami Ramanand Tirtha, the President of the State Congress, was also arrested.

Congress took up the challenge. It called upon the people to hoist the National Flag on all buildings on August 15.

After the midnight of the 14th, when the Bombay-Madras Express was passing through Hyderabad, the Hyderabad Station Police entered the train and removed the National Flags even from inside the compartments.

On Independence Day, the processions and demonstrations

flying National Flags were charged with lathis or fired upon by the Police and large-scale arrests were made. Armed Razakars, co-operating with the Police, tore down the National Flag wherever it was found and offered it every kind of insult. Even the Flags on the buildings of the Government of India did not escape their fury.

When, on August 29, Panditji expressed the indignation of the country at these outrages in the Constituent Assembly, the Hyderabad Government came out with a total denial that the National Flag had ever been subjected to insult.

The Accession *Satyagraha*, thus launched by the State Congress, spread like wild fire. About nine thousand persons courted arrest, National Flag in hand. There was a large-scale refusal to pay the compulsory levy on foodgrains. Thousands of toddy trees were cut down in the villages. Hundreds of village officers resigned. Congressmen, Communists and villagers joined hands in destroying the customs buildings in the border areas. Thousands of students in schools and colleges defied the law.

Razvi also went about his mission with vigour. He declared that Hyderabad was free and independent, and threatened direct action against the Nizam's Government if it ever acceded to the Union. A campaign of terrorization of the villages which had participated in the accession *Satyagraha* was launched and a large number of Hindus left Secunderabad to find safety in the surrounding Union provinces.

15th of August, the appointed date for accession, had come and gone and the Nizam had not acceded. Sir Walter Monckton hoped, however, that given time, the negotiations would bear fruit. Although Sardar was not too happy about it, the Government of India was ultimately induced to authorise Lord Mountbatten to continue the negotiations for two months more. During this respite it was decided by some of the Ittehad leaders that Hyderabad must be strengthened internally and delegations should be sent to the U.K. and U.S.A. to negotiate diplomatic treaties.

On August 27, the Nizam by his *Firman* declared that on August 15, he had assumed the status of an independent sovereign. Immediately, a movement was started by the Ittehad to refer to him as 'His Majesty'.

Sir Walter Monckton was emphatic in his view that the

Nizam must come to terms with India. This advice brought upon him the wrath of the Razakars and Razvi publicly denounced him. Thereupon he tendered the resignation of his office to the Nizam. The Nawab of Chhatari and Nawab Ali Yavar Jung also submitted their resignations. Hearing the news of Sir Walter's resignation, Lord Mountbatten exclaimed: 'We are sunk.' Sir Walter was his trump card.

The Nizam was equally perturbed. Feeling that he had over-played his hand and also lost his chief ally, in dealing with the Government of India he began to play a more cautious game. On August 17, the Nawab of Chhatari wrote to Sardar at the Nizam's instance, conveying the desire of the latter to resume negotiations a week later. Sardar immediately agreed to do so.

On August 24, the Nizam also requested Lord Mountbatten to advise Sir Walter Monckton to continue as Hyderabad's Constitutional Adviser. The request was complied with. Sir Walter, however, was firm. He insisted on a public withdrawal of the attack made on him by Razvi. Ultimately, the Nizam issued a *firman* condemning the attacks on the Delegation and made it up with his constitutional adviser.

Indo-Hyderabad relations evidently hung upon the indispensability of Sir Walter Monckton.

When the Hyderabad Delegation, consisting of the Nawab of Chhatari, Sir Walter Monckton, Ali Yavar Jung and Sir Sultan Ahmed, was about to come to New Delhi to resume talks with Lord Mountbatten, Sardar was far from happy.

On August 24, he wrote to the Governor-General that he would not accept any variation in the Instrument of Accession which had been signed by the other princes; however, he added, if the Nizam's Government were unable to decide to accept accession to the Union, referendum of the people of Hyderabad should be held.

When Lord Mountbatten, following Sardar's advice, pressed for the standard Instrument of Accession with slight modifications, the Nizam by his letter dated September 18, was equally explicit. No accession, but only a treaty between the two independent, sovereign States, was what he wanted. According to him, any accession involving organic union with India, or any that would concede power to the Union to make

laws for his State, was out of question. The suggestion of a referendum was also unceremoniously turned down.

According to the Draft Heads proposed by the Nizam, Hyderabad would be a sovereign and independent State, only associated with the Dominion of India for certain purposes. Of these, political relations with foreign powers would not be one. The army of Hyderabad would be recruited, maintained and equipped by the Nizam's Government and its officers would be appointed by the Nizam. In case of external danger, however, an agreed quota of troops would be placed at the disposal of the Union, but *not* if the danger proceeded from Pakistan. The communications of Hyderabad would be independent of the Union, but an agreement to maintain all-India standards might be entered into.

There was the British pledge not to put pressure on him to accede, said the Nizam. At the end of the letter came the threat: If the Union demanded accession from him, further negotiations would serve no useful purpose. If there was a breakdown, he would publish the communications between Lord Mountbatten and himself!

Sir Walter Monckton, however, pressed the Nizam to enter into a treaty of agreement with the Union short of accession, but preserving independence in law, and prepared a brochure to vindicate Hyderabad's claim. He gave the advice that when circumstances changed, that was to say when Pakistan and Hyderabad grew strong enough to warrant it, the treaty could be denounced, and fresh arrangements made with the Dominions. If so desired, the ties with the Dominion of Pakistan might then be strengthened and those with the Dominion of India loosened. In the meantime, though negotiations should continue as long as possible after the 15th of August, Hyderabad should be prepared for a conflict in any event.

The Delegation, consisting of the Nawab of Chhatari, Ali Yavar Jung, Sir Walter Monckton and Sir Sultan Ahmed, met Lord Mountbatten on September 22. The Indo-Pakistan conflict was then at its height. An attempt therefore was made by the Delegation to play upon the nerves of the Indian leaders. If accession were forced upon the Nizam, there would be bloodshed in Hyderabad, Muslims would kill Hindus and a general communal flare-up in the country would follow.

Lord Mountbatten's pertinent question, 'If bloodshed

started in Hyderabad and the Hindu population were butchered, would the Government of India sit back and watch the situation?" remained unanswered.

Having discussed the pros and cons of all the questions, and Sir Walter having prepared some heads of Agreement, the Delegation returned to Hyderabad. It found the Nizam adamant. Something had happened in the meantime; perhaps Pakistan had tendered some advice. In his letter of September 26, the Nizam stressed his right to independence and prophesied bloodshed throughout South India, if Hyderabad acceded to India.

Sir Walter Monckton in despair decided to leave for England. Before he left for England in September, however, he drafted letters from the Nizam to His Majesty the King of the United Kingdom, Prime Minister Attlee and prominent members of the British Conservative party. He also knew his own value. He said: 'I go, but I come back.'

Meanwhile, the thing which the Nizam feared most was that if Sir Walter Monckton left Hyderabad, Sardar would take the negotiations into his own hands. This he did not want in any event.

It must be admitted that Sir Walter's ingenuity was inexhaustible. He proposed a six-months' Agreement; this, according to him, would provide a breathing-space in which bitterness would abate.

In the meantime, the Nizam and Sir Walter both insistently pressed Lord Mountbatten for the return of the Bolarum Residency and the cantonments, as well as for the supply of military equipment and the removal of Indian troops from Secunderabad. Lord Mountbatten promised the removal of the troops by the end of the next month, but Sardar would not agree to any such step.

About this time Lord Mountbatten had invited V. P. Menon to go to Hyderabad to apply his 'magic touch'. At the last minute, however, the Nawab of Chhatari asked Menon to abandon his visit. The law and order situation would not permit it, he said. The Razakars would not brook the presence of any emissary from Delhi. Menon, the terror of Princely India, had to stay back.

Sir Walter Monckton softened the blow by giving an assurance that no insult was meant to the Government of India.

The assurance had, of course, to be accepted and the affront swallowed.

The Delegation again came to New Delhi on October 10 and met Lord Mountbatten. The usual rituals were gone through. Arguments were advanced on both sides and elaborate notes taken. To all suggestions the Delegation replied by the assurance that they would place everything before His Exalted Highness. Sir Walter reiterated the Nizam's declared policy to treat his Muslim and non-Muslim subjects equally. He did not refer to the undeclared practice to the contrary.

The Nizam's suggestion that substantial powers in respect of Defence and External Affairs should be reserved to himself was turned down by Sardar. He would sooner break off negotiations, he said, than concede them. This brought about some change in the attitude of the Nizam and the Delegation again came to New Delhi and met Lord Mountbatten.

After elaborate negotiations, a year's Standstill Agreement conceding the three Central Subjects, a Collateral Letter from Lord Mountbatten to the Nizam making important concessions to the Nizam and a draft *Firman*, were drawn up by V. P. Menon in consultation with Sir Walter and were approved by Lord Mountbatten, Panditji and Sardar.

All the members of the Delegation held the view that the Nizam would accept the draft. Everyone was happy that there would be peace in the South, at any rate for one year, and then the glorious day would dawn. Each party had its own idea of what that was to be.

The Delegation reached Hyderabad on the afternoon of the 22nd. It went directly to the King Kothi and read out to the Nizam the drafts of the Standstill Agreement and the Collateral Letters. At first the Nizam was hesitant; later, he referred the draft to his Executive Council for advice.

For three days—23rd, 24th and 25th—the Council discussed every clause threadbare.

On one occasion, a special meeting of the Executive Council was held at the King Kothi, presided over by the Nizam himself. It was attended by, among others, El-Edroos, the Commander-in-Chief of the Nizam's Army, and by special invitation, Raja Bahadur S. Aravamudu Ayangar.

The Nizam asked everyone present to express his individual opinion. Pingle Venkatarama Reddy, courtier that he

was, said, 'My opinion is exactly the same as that of His Exalted Highness.'

His Exalted Highness flared up. 'I have called you here that I may listen to your individual opinions, not to echo what I say.'

The Raja Bahadur wished to put a few questions to the meeting. The Nizam having agreed, he asked: 'Have we ever been independent as England, France or Germany?' The unanimous reply was 'No.'

'Suppose a conflict arose between the Indian Union and Hyderabad, how long could we hold out?' asked the Raja Bahadur.

El-Edroos, the Commander-in-Chief, replied, 'Not more than four days.' The Nizam, intervening, said 'Not more than two.'

'The wisest course then would be to sign the Standstill Agreement,' said the Raja Bahadur. 'We have secured much better terms than other States.'

Nawab Mehdi Yar Jung agreed with this view. The only dissentients were Moin Nawaz Jung and another gentleman.

'I agree with Ayangar', said the Nizam. Everyone went home under the impression that he would sign the agreement and the Delegation would leave the next morning.

Ultimately, by six votes to three the draft was accepted by the Executive Council. The dissentients were Moin Nawaz, Abdur Rahim, the Ittehad representative on the Council, and a third Minister.

On the night of the 25th, the Nizam approved of the decision of the Council and promised to sign the Standstill Agreement with a few minor amendments.

The next day the Nizam also approved of the two draft letters to be addressed to Lord Mountbatten. In one of the drafts he made two points: if India went out of the British Commonwealth, he would reconsider his position and if there was war between India and Pakistan, he would remain neutral. New Delhi had already expressed its willingness to accept these two points in advance. There were no other counter-proposals. The other draft was that of a secret letter to be signed by the Nizam undertaking not to accede to Pakistan.

As the Delegation was to leave for Delhi at 8-30 A.M. on the 27th, on the evening of the 26th its members waited upon

the Nizam in the expectation that the documents would be executed by him in their presence.

The documents were read once more. Everything was ready, in order. Suddenly the Nizam announced that he would not sign at that hour of the day; he would do so early next morning, before the Delegation left for New Delhi.

At 3 A.M. on the morning of the 27th, the Razakars were on the streets. Twenty to twenty-five thousand of them surrounded Lake View, Sir Walter Monckton's residence, as also the houses of the Nawab of Chhatari and Sir Sultan Ahmed. They came in trucks and private cars, armed with spears and swords and shouting through loud-speakers: 'The Delegation should be prevented from leaving for Delhi by physical force.'

At 5 A.M. the unhappy plenipotentiaries telephoned to the army headquarters to provide them with an asylum. A British brigadier of the Hyderabad army brought them to safety in a truck.

At 8 A.M. on the morning of the 27th the Nizam sent a message to the Delegation that they were not to proceed to Delhi. He also sent a telegram to Lord Mountbatten saying that the Delegation could not leave on account of unforeseen circumstances, but that it would arrive within three or four days. In his telegram, Sir Walter Monckton also conveyed the information that they might be late by two days.

In the afternoon the Nizam summoned the Delegation to take stock of the situation. He violently denounced the Ittehad, cursed Razvi and asserted that the Standstill Agreement was the right one and should be accepted. 'I am determined,' he said, 'to make Kasim Razvi accept it.'

On the morning of the 28th, the Nizam sent for the Delegation again. His mind, he said, was unchanged. Then, he turned to his chief secretary and asked him to call Razvi at once.

Within a few minutes Razvi joined them. Then the Nizam turned to him and asked him why he objected to the Agreement.

Razvi was firm. 'If Ala Hazrat signs the Standstill Agreement, it will mean the end of Hyderabad,' he declared. 'This delegation is weak. If it had insisted on the original agreement, the Government of India would have accepted what we wanted. I am sure they would have yielded.'



The Nizam



Mir Laik Ali

'This delegation is no good,' he continued. 'I request Ala Hazrat not to sign this agreement. Give me a chance to form a new delegation. I am sure it will succeed, where this delegation has failed.'

Sir Sultan Ahmed turned to Razvi. 'What reason have you to think that where the delegation which included Sir Walter Monckton failed, another would succeed?' he asked.

'I have my reasons,' responded Razvi.

'What are they?' asked Sir Sultan.

'Please don't put such embarrassing question to me,' with these words Razvi turned to the Nizam and said, 'I am absolutely certain that we shall succeed.'

'Let us have at least one reason,' pressed Sir Sultan.

'The Indian Union is fully occupied with the trouble in the north,' was Razvi's reply. 'If we insist, they are not in a position to do anything to us, and they cannot refuse our demands.' Then he turned to the Nizam and added, 'Give me at least a chance to continue the negotiations.'

Monckton was firm: so were the other members. 'No other delegation can hope to achieve the treaty as proposed by His Exalted Highness. Sardar Patel is adamant on this point. Not one point which could be pressed to advantage has been left unused by us,' said Sir Sultan.

Razvi was equally firm. He pressed the Nizam to appoint Moin Nawab Jung and Abdur Rahim, the two dissentient members of the Executive Council, on the new delegation.

The Nizam appeared to waver. The four members of the Delegation therefore tendered their resignations. Kasim Razvi took his leave.

'This blackguard, this tupenny-halfpenny man must have gone mad,' said the Nizam after Razvi left.

Sir Sultan was indignant. 'All of us were put out when this man was brought into our discussions. Yesterday we refused to meet Your Exalted Highness, if he was present.'

The members of the Delegation then withdrew.

The Nizam accepted their resignations.¹

Razvi's attitude was based on a definite line of reasoning. With other Ittehad leaders, he firmly believed that the Government of India was cracking because of external troubles and

¹ I am obliged to my friend Sir Sultan Ahmed, for confirming the accuracy of the narrative.

internal differences. They had no doubt that there would soon be a change of Government in New Delhi. If, therefore, the negotiations were broken off at this time, an India, growing weaker every day, would not be able to take any effective action against Hyderabad, while Hyderabad could, in the meantime, consolidate its position. On the other hand, if the issue of accession were postponed for a year by an acceptance of the Standstill Agreement, the Indian Union would emerge from its difficulties and become too strong to be successfully resisted.

CHAPTER IX

THE LAIK ALI MINISTRY

THE Ittehad was on the scene. The Nizam, by his letter of 31st October, threatened to accede to Pakistan if the negotiations with the Government of India broke down.

A new delegation of Razvi's choice was now appointed. This consisted of Moin Nawaz Jung, the Home Member, who, on Ali Yavar Jung's resignation, had been placed in charge of constitutional affairs, Abdur Rahim, the Ittehad leader, and Pingle Venkataram Reddy.

Pingle Venkataram Reddy was one of the Hindu jagirdars of the State. Shrewd but good-natured businessman, he was not interested in office or politics. Nevertheless, he was a trusted friend of Mr. Abdur Rahim and could not sacrifice his position with the Ittehad by refusing the honour conferred on him. To be on the right side of eventualities, however, he submitted a note to the Nizam in which he said that the new delegation was not likely to achieve anything.

I had very friendly relations with Sri Pingle Reddy. He had been a Director of the Bombay Life Insurance Company when I was its Chairman before 1937. But in Hyderabad, because he was the Hindu mascot of the Ittehad Ministry, he treated me as an utter stranger. In New Delhi and Bombay, on the other hand, he was my friend frankly telling me about the doings of his friends in Hyderabad. From the very beginning he assured me, with a sly twinkle in his eye, that they were doomed.

On November 2, the new Hyderabad Delegation met Lord Mountbatten, but the persuasiveness of Moin Nawaz was of no avail. Lord Mountbatten was firm; even, in some respects, stern. He declined to countenance further negotiations. The draft Standstill Agreement with the Collateral Letters had been approved by both negotiating parties and must be signed as they stood. It would mean irreparable disaster for the Nizam, if he failed to sign the Agreement. Lord Mountbatten also asked the members of the Delegation to disabuse their minds about the strength of India. It was immensely powerful and still possessed one of the biggest armies in the world.

Finally, Lord Mountbatten turned to Reddy and asked him whether he had anything to say. 'My views are the same as my Ruler's,' was his loyal reply. He himself narrated the incident to me.

On the return of the Delegation to Hyderabad, the Nizam felt a little uneasy and begged of Lord Mountbatten, who was then proceeding to England, to defer negotiations till he was back in India.

Having obtained a respite, the Nizam renewed his contact with Sir Walter Monckton who, disgusted with the treatment meted out to him, was on his way to London. Letters and telegrams passed between them.

The Nizam implored his constitutional adviser to postpone his departure to England and on his way see Mr. Jinnah at Karachi. Sir Walter was insistent—and rightly, too—that he would not like to do this. His advice had been rejected and the delegation, of which he was a member, had been superseded; nor would seeing the Governor-General of Pakistan be a pleasing affair, for the Ittehad was sure to have reported against him.

Sir Walter Monckton, however, continued to press the Nizam to execute the Standstill Agreement. According to him, it was necessary to have at least comparative peace in order to see how the Dominions got along, and to prepare Hyderabad for a more genuine display of strength later on.

About the middle of November, Sir Walter Monckton met Mr. Jinnah who was then ill and had little time to spare, but nothing appears to have come out of this discussion. At the Nizam's instance, Sir Walter also saw Lord Mountbatten in London. His Ministers were firm, the Governor-General said, and there was no scope for further negotiations.

In the meantime, Razvi and his principal lieutenant abused Sardar and the Government of India in their public speeches to their hearts' content. The public had no confidence in most members of the Nizam's Government, Razvi said. He also issued public appeals to the Muslims of the Deccan, to the Qaid-e-Azam of Pakistan and even to the Muslims of Pakistan, to save Hyderabad from India.

On November 24, the Delegation led by Moin Nawaz again went to New Delhi. Next day, when they had an interview with Lord Mountbatten, he refused to consider any change in

the terms of settlement aimed at. On the 29th the Delegation returned to Hyderabad and the Standstill Agreement, as originally drafted, was signed by the Nizam with a few unimportant modifications. The Collateral Letters were also signed.

On the same day Sardar made a statement in the Constituent Assembly announcing the fact that Hyderabad had signed the Standstill Agreement. Though he was cheered, there was a general distrust of the Agreement on our side. The public view was that the Nizam had scored a victory and escaped accession.

The Nizam soon began to woo Sir Walter Monckton. Would he induce people in high positions in England to appoint a diplomatic representative at the Nizam's court and would the U.K. enter into an alliance with Hyderabad?

Razvi now proposed that Mir Laik Ali should be appointed Prime Minister in place of Sir Mehdi Yar Jung who, on the resignation of the Nawab of Chhatari, had been induced to take up the office as a stop-gap. But the Nizam did not like the idea. Mir Laik Ali was Razvi's man. He complained to Sir Walter Monckton that Razvi himself was undesirable.

It appears that the Nizam enquired of Mr. Jinnah whether it was advisable to appoint Mir Laik Ali as Prime Minister. As the services of that enterprising man were likely to be employed for some constructional work in Pakistan, Mr. Jinnah at first advised the Nizam against his appointment as Prime Minister on the grounds that it was likely to prejudice the Nizam's negotiations with India.

The Nizam was only too willing to accept this advice, for he evidently did not favour an Ittehad Prime Minister. He also played with the idea that Pingle Venkataram Reddy would be more suitable for the post, as recommended by Mr. Abdur Rahim. But further pressure was brought to bear on him and on November 24, 1947, he again asked Mr. Jinnah's advice with regard to the appointment of Laik Ali to the Prime Ministership.

The Nizam saw that he was between the devil and the deep sea, between Razvi and the Indian Union, and made his choice. Mir Laik Ali was released by Jinnah from his promise to serve Pakistan and was appointed Prime Minister.

As a result of this victory, Razvi emerged as the holy warrior of Hyderabad. In a public gathering he was present-

ed with the *Qoran* and a sword. As the leader of the crusade, he reacted to his high position by appointing area commanders for the whole State and issuing an appeal for volunteers to come forward to defend its frontiers.

The Nizam's surrender to the Ittehad was complete when he appointed not only the Prime Minister but every Minister according to Razvi's wishes.

Pingle Venkataram Reddy, the trusted friend of Abdur Rahim, was appointed Deputy Prime Minister, while Moin Nawaz Jung was appointed the Minister of Finance and External Affairs. Mr. Abdur Rahim himself and three other Muslim associates of Razvi were also included in the Ministry.

Among the Hindu Ministers, only two were independent of the Razvi group. Ramachar, the leader of the State Congress group which was opposed to the group of Ramanand Tirtha, was induced to join the Ministry on the promise that satisfactory constitutional reforms would be introduced immediately. Sri Malikarjunappa was included in the Ministry as the representative of the Lingayat Hindus.

Venkatarao, who was appointed the minister to represent the Depressed Classes, was the leader of a small group of Harijans who were closely associated with the Razakars, and who could be described as the Ittehad Harijans. A clever man, with a shrewd eye to personal advancement, Venkatarao had had an eventful career which he started by claiming that Harijans constituted a separate nation and allying himself with Bahadur Yar Jung. However, when the Harijan community became seriously perturbed over the forcible conversion of its members to Islam, he made it up with the Congress leaders, condemned the conversions and claimed that the Harijans were Hindus first. Later, when the State Congress went into the wilderness, he reverted to the old theory that Harijans were not Hindus and won Kasim Razvi's esteem. Now he was duly rewarded.

Mr. Joshi, who was also appointed a minister, was a Gujarati businessman and the owner of an engineering firm in Jalna.

He came up to me at one of the receptions and enquired about me and my wife with easy familiarity in a tone of close relationship.

After a little talk I turned to the host and blamed him for

not having introduced this gentleman to me, whereupon there was loud laughter from all who stood near us. I could not understand what this meant and the gentleman's face fell.

'You have forgotten me,' he said. 'I am Joshi.'

'He is our new Minister,' explained the host.

The next day Joshi and his wife came to see us.

'Munshiji, you have ruined me,' he said.

'How?' I enquired.

'I have told everyone here that I was educated under your care.'

'But how was I to know that I had had the privilege of looking after your education?' It was difficult for me to keep a serious face.

Joshi had invested heavily in Razvi. In November he had talked eloquently of his influence over me. But more, he had assured Razvi that because of his intimacy with Sardar, he could bring about a settlement by direct approach.

As a fellow Gujarati, Joshi had then written to Sardar for an interview, but had made it appear that the request came from Razvi himself. Sardar had naturally replied that he had no objection to meeting Razvi and it may be that Joshi had given Razvi in his turn the impression that Sardar was anxious to meet him. Certain it is that Razvi's vanity had been tickled, for he accompanied Joshi to Delhi.

From my talks with Sardar, Sri Shankar, Sardar's secretary, and Joshi, I gathered what had happened at the interview.

Razvi and Joshi were ushered into the drawing-room by Shankar, and there sat Sardar like a statue, his face set firm.

Joshi made a *namaskar* (salute) and smiled humbly. Razvi came in and, giving a nodding *salam* to Sardar, took a chair.

There was silence.

'Well,' asked the Sardar, 'what do you want?'

Razvi had the look of a fanatic, his rolling eyes emitting fire as if he were possessed. He glared angrily for a moment. Joshi was nervous, but Sardar's eyes were unflinching.

Razvi broke the silence by saying, 'I want a change of heart from you.'

When he so wished, Sardar could make silence very uncomfortable. At length he remarked, 'A change of heart is only necessary for one whose heart is full of poison.'

'Why don't you let Hyderabad remain independent?' asked Razvi.

'I have gone beyond all possible limits. I have conceded to Hyderabad what I did not concede to any other State,' returned Sardar.

'But I want you to understand the difficulties of Hyderabad,' pursued Razvi.

'I don't see any difficulty, unless you have come to some understanding with Pakistan,' was Sardar's reply.

'If you do not see our difficulties, we will not yield,' cried Razvi working himself up to a state of excitement. 'We shall fight and die to the last man for Hyderabad.'

'How can I stop you from committing suicide if you want to?' Sardar blandly replied.

'You do not know the Muslims of Hyderabad,' repeated Razvi. 'We shall sacrifice everything for our independence.'

'If it comes to sacrifice, India has shown what it can do, but Hyderabad has yet to show what it can,' came the cool reply.

Razvi now began a hysterical tirade on the shedding of blood for the *Deen* and the *Millat*.

Sardar listened in stolid silence to what Razvi had to say and, when he paused for breath, said, 'I would advise you to see the sun before it is too late. Do not plunge into darkness while the light is still visible.'

The interview, which had been conducted in Razvi's Persianised Urdu and high-flown English and Sardar's Gujarati-Hindi and crisp English, came to an end.

Razvi and Joshi then left.

Razvi gave a report of this interview to a crowd of admiring Razakars on November 25:

On the invitation of Sardar Patel I went to Delhi. The object of my visit was to place before the world the condition of Hyderabad and Muslims. I had been invited by Sardar Patel. If I had not accepted the invitation, we should have been guilty of tolerating the malicious propaganda against us. Even in the most risky situations a Muslim never fears to stand for the truth. I met Sardar Patel. It will not be out of place if I call Sardar Patel *the Congress*.

By the grace of God our country has at last been represented by our people. It has been revealed that the previous delegation begged for alms at the door of Sardar Patel and bowed before Lord Mountbatten. The result of all this was that Sardar Patel began to climb to new high levels of pride.

CHAPTER X

THE SITUATION AS I FOUND IT

ON January 15, we shifted from the Bolarum Residency to the neighbouring Deccan House. The building formed part of the Secunderabad Cantonment and had been used till then by the general in command of the troops stationed at Secunderabad.

I changed the name of Deccan House to its Indian equivalent, *Dakshina Sadan*. This created a certain sensation in the circles of the Nizam and Razvi. What right had I to change the name? This House, with the Secunderabad cantonment, was shortly coming to the Nizam's Government. The reports of the discussion that were retailed to me about this change of name, proved most interesting.

It is a pity that after the Police Action our military authorities have restored the House to its old name of Deccan House. in spite of the association which the name *Dakshina Sadan* had acquired in 1948.

The presence of India's Agent-General in Hyderabad had a tonic effect on the morale of the people. For some reason or other I was associated in the popular mind with the power and prestige of the old-time Resident, though I had not even a tithe of his power. My presence in Hyderabad was also taken as a token that the formidable Sardar was on the move after all.

Confidence was in the air. Hundreds of refugees had returned to their homes in Secunderabad and now visitors began to visit me in order to pour their tales of woe into my ears.

The Ittehad press, on the other hand, kept up a ceaseless campaign of vilification. In anything I did or said, they discovered a sinister motive and made it an excuse for indulging in offensive comments. According to them one thing was certain. I was a mere 'trade agent' who must be kept in his proper place; I had no right to go about in a car which carried the national flag; I had no business to receive people or to appear at receptions.

In the first press interview I had given in Hyderabad, I had stated, 'I have come here to strengthen the bonds of friendship between the Indian Union and the Government of Hyderabad.

I have come here to win the heart of the Nizam, if he allows me to do so.' These harmless words of mine were found objectionable. Who was I to talk of winning the heart of the Nizam?

From the very day of my arrival in Hyderabad attempts were made by official and non-official Ittehad agencies to overawe me into giving up my office or lapsing into obscure quiescence. I decided to show that I proposed doing nothing of the kind.

Several private receptions followed, some of which were attended by Laik Ali, Moin Nawaz Jung, Ramachar and Joshi. One host, in order to avert the wrath of Razvi, went to him personally with an invitation to attend his reception.

'I, to attend a reception to Munshi! He has not yet called on me,' cried the hunchback Fuehrer.

A few days after my arrival, the citizens of Secunderabad held a public reception in my honour. On the day before it was to take place, the Razakars went round some of the localities threatening those who attended it with retribution. Nevertheless, about twenty-five thousand people congregated on the race-course and Ramanand Tirtha took the chair. For the first time people shouted '*Mahatma Gandhi ki jai*,' '*Jawaharlal Nehru ki jai*' and '*Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel ki jai*' fearlessly.

For myself, I spoke warily. I referred to the Nizam as being in the great tradition of Hindu-Muslim unity founded by Akbar, a compliment at which any ruler, or any of his admirers, either Hindu or Muslim, would have felt flattered. I carefully avoided the word 'accession' and merely described myself as a midwife to assist at the birth of a close and permanent association between India and Hyderabad.

My moderation was of no avail. Next day the Ittehad Press went for me hammer and tongs. I was guilty of a breach of the Standstill Agreement; I had no right to attend a reception in my honour, much less to deliver a speech; I was going beyond my powers as 'a trade agent'; I must be asked to leave Hyderabad. Above all, I had insulted 'His Majesty' the Nizam by comparing him with Akbar. Akbar was not a true Muslim; the Nizam, on the other hand, was the head of an Islamic State. My reference to a close association with India was construed as an 'attempt to resuscitate and revive paramountcy.'

I soon realised the gravity of the situation.

The Razakars were a very real menace. I now had first-hand knowledge of their raids on villages in the State, as also on the Union villages across the border. During these raids, the Ittehad levied collective tribute and indulged in arson, murder and loot. Very little pretext was required by them to inflict brutal reprisals on any village suspected of Congress or Communist sympathy. Sometimes I met groups of Razakars on the road rushing to the country-side on their nefarious mission in trucks, shouting slogans and brandishing weapons.

In the City there was a camp of fanatical or needy Muslims drawn from all parts of India as well as from Pakistan, and even from Arabia, for recruitment in the Razakar corps or armed forces.

The State was making preparations for the manufacture of arms and ammunitions and large purchases of trucks and motor vehicles were being made in order to give swift mobility for the Razakars and the Police.

The negotiations for the purchase of Goa were being conducted by an Englishman. El Edroos, the Commander-in-Chief of the Hyderabad Army, had gone to Europe to purchase arms from Czechoslovakia and France.

I had it from a highly-placed source that the Peacock Airborne Division, consisting of fifty bombers, was being maintained by Hyderabad in Pakistan or Iraq. It was being kept ready to bomb Ahmedabad and Bombay if any military action were taken by the Union against Hyderabad. These mysterious bombers figured in secret conferences throughout the year 1948.

Ghulam Muhammad, later the Governor-General of Pakistan, was then the Finance Minister of Pakistan. When he was Finance Minister of Hyderabad, he had been a friend and benefactor of Laik Ali. A few weeks before I came, he had come to Hyderabad and persuaded the Nizam's Government to give a loan of 20 crores'-worth of Indian securities to Pakistan.

The control of the State-owned railways had already been handed over to the Nizam's Government. The State-controlled Deccan Airways was mainly staffed by the Ittehadis.

Under the Standstill Agreement, the posts, telegraphs and telephones of the Union, were to be handed over to the Nizam's Government. If all of them were handed over, it would involve

a serious danger of the South being cut off from the North at the will of the Ittehad.

The Nizam's Government had been pressing for the withdrawal of the Union troops from Secunderabad and Lord Mountbatten had agreed to the suggestion. If these troops were withdrawn, even the little restraint which their presence was exercising over the activities of the Ittehad would have gone.

On the 10th of January, therefore, I met Sardar at Bombay. As a result of our discussions, he issued instructions to the Provincial Governments to prevent their territorial integrity from being interfered with. He directed that the Secunderabad barracks and the communications in Hyderabad were not to be handed over until the situation had become clear after the troops had left Secunderabad. An airline with its headquarters outside Hyderabad was also directed to be given a permit to serve Hyderabad from Bangalore.

One of the first of the prominent citizens of Hyderabad to take me into his confidence was Sri Ramachar, the Congress Minister in the Laik Ali Ministry. He was in a predicament. He had allowed himself to be persuaded to join the Ministry, though with considerable misgivings, by the impressive professions of goodwill which Laik Ali could always offer with consummate art. He had been promised that immediately he joined the Ministry, the question of the reorganization of the Government on a popular basis would be undertaken. But whenever he raised the question, Mir Laik Ali, an adept in sweet easiveness, failed to come to brass tacks.

Ramachar was also seriously disturbed by the report of the Razakars' activities in the villages. He had heard of them before, but now, as a Minister, he came to know of them at first-hand.

In the Nalgonda and Warangal districts the situation was frightful. In one village, nineteen Hindus were made to stand in a line and shot dead by the police. There were similar atrocities in Bibinagar. In the Nizamabad jail, the officials, assisted by their Muslim prisoners and Razakars, had attacked the Hindu prisoners, 123 of whom were injured in the attack.

Sri Ramachar was miserable beyond words. In his resignation of January 24 he stated:

I refuse to be a silent spectator of the goondalism and the establishment of the rival armed forces of the Government. The

Bibinagar outrage has shocked me. Either we suppress the gangsters ruthlessly or we abdicate. Could there be anything more scandalous for an administration than seeing the tragedy at Nizamabad?

He also wrote to the Nizam directly, pointing out that the Ittehad had a hold over the army and the police: that no one was happy with the present Government: that the State Congress also was opposed to it: that the Communists were working havoc and that the Ittehad continued to dominate the Government. As a loyal subject, Ramachar wrote, he could not continue to be associated with a Government which permitted or connived at such things.

When on the 7th February, Mir Laik Ali asked Sri Ramachar to reconsider his resignation, the latter replied by demanding the dissolution of the Razakars. Mir Laik Ali made no reply.

In a public statement Sri Ramachar said:

Meanwhile the situation in the country continued to deteriorate rapidly. Forces of violence and goondaism were let loose in the country wildly. Arson, loot and murder formed the normal events of the day. Armed men rode round the country spilling death wherever they went. Village after village was burnt down; several villages were abandoned out of sheer fright. There has been no security of life or property in the State for those who will not practically be slaves. Even in the jail the hand of the goonda is at work. The Majlis has openly taken to a policy of fanaticistic preaching fire and sword. Do or die *jehad* has been proclaimed against everyone who opposes its goal of the establishment of an Islamic State. As if this is not enough, their leader goes on proclaiming that this Hyderabad of ours is to be the home of the 4 crores of Muslims of the Union.

CHAPTER XI

NEGOTIATION: FIRST STAGE

ON about January 10, I applied myself to my first task, which was that of coming to a clear understanding with Laik Ali with regard to two points. What were the implications of the Standstill Agreement, and how were we to secure its implementation by both sides?

Between my arrival in Hyderabad on January 5 and the Police Action on September 13, there were four distinct stages in the effort which was being made to bring about happier relations between India and Hyderabad through negotiation.

The first stage lasted from January 10 to January 31. It was an attempt on my part to induce Laik Ali to implement the Standstill Agreement. It failed.

The second stage, from February 1 to March 29, was taken up in my attempt to induce Laik Ali to come to an agreed basis of permanent relations between the Union and Hyderabad. Again, I failed.

The third stage, from April 1 to June 19, was an attempt on the part of Lord Mountbatten with the help of Sir Walter Monckton to come to a similar agreement by offering concessions to Hyderabad of a very far-reaching character. This attempt also failed.

In the fourth stage, the Nizam made a feeble effort to escape from the vicious grip of the Ittehad and come to some settlement. He also failed.

At all stages, the Ittehad came in the way.

The task which confronted me in Hyderabad was both delicate and difficult. Its nature could only be assessed against the background of the Government of India's approach to the Standstill Agreement. Like a scripture, the Standstill Agreement had been read by the different parties, each in his own sense. As V. P. Menon says:

Nehru felt that the Agreement would purchase communal peace in the South for at least one year. Lord Mountbatten was sanguine that it would allow heads to cool and hearts to soften and that before the expiry of the Agreement the Nizam, like all the other rulers, would accede to India. The Nizam and his advisers conceived the Agreement as providing breathing-space

in which to secure the withdrawal of the Indian troops from Hyderabad and eventually to build up their position and strength to a stage when they would be able to assert the independence of the State. Sardar was doubtful of the *bona fides* of the Hyderabad Government.

Never in the rich and varied annals of diplomatic history, so far as I know, was a diplomatic agent sent on such a vague and nebulous mission as I was. No instrument of instructions was given to me. My only authority was the Clause in the Standstill Agreement which ran: 'The Government of India and the Nizam agree for the better execution of the purposes of this Agreement to appoint Agents in Hyderabad and Delhi respectively, and to give every facility to them for the discharge of their functions.'

The Agreement carried no implications as regards the scope of my duties. No one seems to have applied his mind to what I was expected to do in Hyderabad. The official part of my mission was clear enough; the Nizam had conceded the three subjects of Defence, External Affairs and Communications to the Indian Union; as its representative, therefore, I had to exercise, in respect of these three subjects, the powers which the Resident formerly exercised. I had also to see that the Nizam's Government implemented the Standstill Agreement in full. I was also expected to use whatever persuasive powers I happened to have been gifted with, to bring about a change of heart in the Nizam and his Advisers so that an organic relationship between the State and the Indian Union could be established.

The Government of India knew of the Nizam's decision to declare his independence. His object in entering into the Standstill Agreement, everyone knew, was to gain time to 'prepare for a show-down'. Gandhiji and Sardar both had told me that I was to work for a permanent settlement till the end of March, 1948, after which date the issue 'had to be clinched'. As I understood my task, therefore, it was to keep the Government of India posted with full information about any attempt to build up the military strength of the State, to disrupt the common economy with India or to establish foreign contacts.

I had also the responsibility of collecting all authentic information about the conditions in the State, particularly the activities of the Razakars. There was also a humanistic as-

pect to my duties. That was to bring some hope and confidence to the panic-stricken people of Hyderabad, frightened by the growing menace of the Razakars, that the Government of India were not blind to their plight.

Of one thing I was sure. As Agent-General I was not a subordinate officer of the State Ministry, appointed only to carry out the secretarial mandates. If it had been so, Sardar would never have offered the office to me; Gandhiji would never have approved of my accepting it; and I would certainly have refused the honour which brought me only risk and no return.

I had served the Congress; I knew the Congress mind. I also enjoyed the complete confidence of Gandhiji and the Sardar. They knew that for years I had not been able to reconcile myself to the conquistador spirit which had characterised the Muslim League and forced the Partition on the country. In 1947, for various reasons, I had to admit the wisdom of the Partition; looking to the circumstances, I still hold that it has been the wisest course. At the same time, both of them knew well that after the Partition I had been allergic to the exhibition of that old spirit on the part of any section of Indian Muslims.

I was clear in my mind that if India was to live, the Muslims in India must cheerfully accept to be an integral part of the Indian nation, making no separate claims, owing no expressed or unexpected loyalty to Pakistan, harbouring no antagonism to the other elements in the country. This view was, if at all, more strongly held by Sardar. If, therefore, they chose to send me to Hyderabad, I was sure that they could not possibly have failed to take into account my point of view.

No wonder, one newspaper called me the 'advance-guard of the Indian Army'. And a brilliant columnist—a Britisher with the utter incapacity, which many Britishers had then developed, to appreciate the Indian point of view—went to the extent of saying 'Munshi has been chosen to be the Trojan Horse in the Siege of Hyderabad.' Whatever I was, the Trojan Horse, I was not. My life, my work and outlook were known to all concerned.

In the preliminary discussions which Laik Ali and Moin Nawaz had with me, we easily came to certain terms. The territorial integrity of the Union was to be respected. The

Nizam's army and police were to be ordered not to chase refugees across the border, nor to search houses there, nor, as was common, to fire into the Union territory. Those persons who were arrested and whose properties were seized within the Union were to be transferred to the respective Provincial Governments.

Then we began to discuss the implications of the Standstill Agreement. As we went through it clause by clause, I discovered to my surprise that no agreement could be such a 'dis-agreement'; for no clause was understood by both parties to mean the same thing.

If the implications of a clause were in favour of India, it was repudiated by Laik Ali; such a construction, he contended, was abrogated either by the lapse of Paramountcy or the terms of the Collateral Letters. If, on the other hand, there was an implication which favoured Hyderabad, he insisted on immediate compliance irrespective of what happened to the other clauses. The doctrine of reciprocal performance of promises, as known to the law of contract, was evidently unknown to Laik Ali and Moin Nawaz.

But I could see what they were driving at. They wanted to establish contact with foreign governments under the guise of trade. They also wanted, above all else, the economic independence of Hyderabad. The resources of the State were to be built up independently of the Union. The hard currency earned by exporting commodities from Hyderabad was to be at the disposal of the State for dealing with foreign countries as it chose. In addition, they were convinced that India's economy was on the eve of collapse and so wanted to safeguard their interests, if possible, by strengthening their economic ties with Pakistan.

At the same time, they were insistent that the Government of India was to remove the Union troops from Secunderabad forthwith, and to supply them with the arms and ammunition they required for the State troops. They claimed that the State Forces Scheme, which had been saved by the Standstill Agreement, had lapsed with the disappearance of British Paramountcy.

I also found that whatever protestations he made, Mir Laik Ali's first loyalty was to Mr. Jinnah, and he looked to

Ghulam Muhammad, the Finance Minister of Pakistan, as his guide.

Of all the men that I met in Hyderabad, Nawab Moin Nawaz was by far the cleverest. I found that his reputation for being the brain behind the Ittehad was more than justified. Polished in manners and speech, incapable of losing self-control, he had the perfect diplomatic flair. But in his hostility to India he was rooted firm as a rock. He never expressed it in so many words, but to him Hyderabad was a Muslim territory which could, in no event, be anything but independent of India. He was also the keeper of Laik Ali's conscience. Whenever the latter was inclined to yield, it was Moin Nawaz who brought him back to the undeviating path which led Hyderabad away from India.

On the question of the reported atrocities by the Razakars, their attitude was one of injured innocence. Once Laik Ali conceded that a serious incident had occurred, but Moin Nawab immediately corrected him. According to the later all the reports of atrocities were either imaginary or exaggerated. The Ittehad was a spontaneous movement of the Muslims against accession to India and had nothing to do with the Nizam's Government. They were only patriotic people of Hyderabad who went to the rescue of harmless Muslims when they were harassed by the Communists.

I was faced with great difficulty in verifying the reports of the atrocities committed by the Razakars, which were pouring in from all sides. Laik Ali, Moin Nawaz, the Nizam's radio, the Ittehad newspapers and the official spokesmen of the State, all insisted that nothing untoward was happening in the State. On the other hand, every Hindu and non-Ittehad Muslim whom I met, vouched for the substantial truth of the press reports collected by the courageous correspondents of the leading Indian newspapers.

In the conditions which prevailed, an independent enquiry was impossible. No person, however highly placed, could go into the interior without being surrounded by local officials or Razakars. If he was bent on enquiry, the villagers would be kept away from him under threat of dire penalties. If, in spite of these difficulties, he managed to establish contact with them, he was forced by persistent harassment to go back.

In January, after consulting Laik Ali, I went to Bezwada (now Vijayawada) by car, accompanied by a District Superintendent of Police of the Nizam's Government, deputed by him to go with me. When my visit was announced in the papers, Hindu leaders from various towns and villages en route came and invited me to halt for a few minutes by the roadside, just for a small reception. I agreed.

However, to my surprise, although I motored along the highway for about two hundred miles, I did not encounter a single Hindu. Only at one place the Nizam's police produced a trembling Hindu who, with his eyes fixed on the police officers, complained of harassment by the Communists. As I passed village after village, I saw Razakar volunteers cycling in advance of me.

After I returned to Secunderabad, several of those who had invited me to halt at their town or village, came to apologise for not having received me. The Razakars had preceded me and warned them that if they were found anywhere near the road while my party was passing, they would have to pay heavily for it.

Some months later, Homi Taleyarkhan, a Bombay journalist, came to Hyderabad to make an on-the-spot report of the situation. He saw Razvi and was taken in by his hearty manner. The Bidar atrocities were then fresh and I suggested to Taleyarkhan that, if he were allowed, he should go and see things for himself. So, when Razvi offered him a car to go wherever he liked, he agreed to visit Bidar.

Next morning Razvi's car, with the Razakar flag flying, came to the *Dakshina Sadan* to take Taleyarkhan to Bidar, but after going about ten miles out of Hyderabad the driver stopped the car and told him that his orders were not to take him to Bidar, but to Nalgonda and Warangal, to see the excesses committed by the Communists. Taleyarkhan returned to the *Dakshina Sadan* furious.

The late Amritlal Sheth, then editor of the *Janmabhoomi*, had a similar experience. Sheth met Mir Laik Ali, who was emphatic in denying that there had been any atrocities at Bidar and invited him to go there personally and see things for himself. Laik Ali also promised to send a car next morning. I had already told Sheth how Taleyarkhan had to safeguard himself against being taken to some other place. Sheth

therefore invited a local lawyer whom he knew to accompany him to the afflicted villages.

Next morning, a very polite official came to Sheth, who was staying at the Hyderabad Government's Guest House, at Greenlands, and regretted that owing to the tension arising out of Indo-Hyderabad relations he could not allow such a distinguished visitor to visit Bidar. Meanwhile, the lawyer whom Sheth had invited to join him on the trip, arrived at Greenlands. Before he could enter the compound, he was chased away by Razakars. He only escaped being manhandled by running into a shop and concealing himself.

Under such conditions I had a hard time obtaining authentic information. However, I soon succeeded in building up machinery for the collection of news from the districts. This was most essential from my point of view, for apart from verifying the reports received by me, my very reliability was in question, for, whenever Laik Ali went to New Delhi, he protested that the reports of the atrocities that were published in the Indian newspapers and broadcast through All-India Radio, were imaginary.

There was also a section of influential persons in New Delhi who carried on a campaign that the reports that I was submitting to the Government of India were not trustworthy. According to these worthies, the Razakars were not on trial for what they were reported to have done; it was India's Agent-General who was on trial for sending unreliable reports. I had, therefore, to check the report of every incident that was brought to me, to obtain a reliable corroboration and scrutinise the evidence.

After receiving a report, I would request some reliable member of the public to make an enquiry on the spot. The representatives of the Associated Press of India, the United Press of India, or the *Hindu* would also be good enough to make local enquiries and verify facts. Sometimes Narayanarao, the undaunted leader of the Arya Samaj, and his brave followers, went at great personal risk to those places where others could not go, and collected statements. After this evidence was obtained, one or two of my officers went to do the checking at or near the place of occurrence. On several occasions, villagers were brought to me at dead of night to narrate their personal experiences.

Many lawyers had boycotted the courts as an act of civil resistance against the misdeeds of the Razakars. Early in 1948 a Pleaders' Protest Committee had been formed to draw the attention of the Government to the grievances of the public. At my suggestion, its vigilance sub-committee took upon itself the very difficult task of collecting evidence of the reported atrocities. Many brave lawyers went to the scene, more often than not accompanied by the adventurous correspondent of the *Hindu*. They collected the statements of persons concerned, took photographs and submitted their reports to me.

To go through the statements and the reports was a trial for me but Razvi himself often came to my rescue. At some public meeting he would heroically announce what the Razakars had done in a particular village, and the report of his speech would appear the next day in the Urdu organs of the *Ittehad*.

And yet Laik Ali continued to maintain that the reports of the atrocities were unfounded. The surprise was, not that he should have said this, but that various important persons in New Delhi should have believed him.

In addition to Ramachar, several Congress leaders and workers who had parted company with Swami Ramanand Tirtha and his group, were in constant touch with me. Of them, besides Ramachar, the most prominent was B. Ramakrishna Rao, a very able and reliable lawyer, respected by everyone for his sincerity and moderation.

A few days after he had presided over the reception given to me by the public of Secunderabad, Swami Ramanand Tirtha was arrested. However, Bindu and Melkote, two leaders of his group, continued to conduct the resistance movement started by the State Congress from the border villages of the Union districts. They kept in constant touch with me and met me several times when I was in Bombay.

I also met some independent Hindu and Muslim men of position in Hyderabad. Most of them begged me to do something to end this reign of terror, for they had not outgrown the habit of thinking of me as a sort of Resident.

CHAPTER XII

THE COMMUNISTS ON THE MOVE

IN the beginning I kept in touch with some of the Communist leaders who were then associated with the Swami group in a United Front. As they were very effective in the districts of Nalgonda and Warangal, I applied my mind to the study of the Communist movement in Hyderabad.

Since 1937, when I had been Home Minister in Bombay and Bombay City, a cockpit of Communism, I had continued to keep Communist activities under close observation.

In 1940, the Communists of Hyderabad founded the Comrades' Association in their usual conspiratorial manner. Its objects were so vaguely defined that, with the blindness common to such men all the world over, the nationalists and progressives, among whom were Congressmen as well as progressive Muslims, were inclined to walk into the Comrades' parlour at first.

The most prominent Communist in the Association was Narayan Reddy, who had acquired popular glamour by courting arrest in the 1938 *Satyagraha* as a State Congress worker. The other important Communist was Mokhdum Mohi-ud-Din. These two leaders soon established contact with the Communist Party of India, which immediately seized the opportunity of winning a separate Andhra State as a potential Communist province, an Indian Yenan wherefrom to 'liberate' the entire country.

The Association, once it had become an organ of the C.P.I., proceeded at once to set in motion the Trojan Horse technique with which the world is by now familiar. During the Trojan War described by Homer, the Greeks developed the device of conquering Troy by secreting some of their number in a wooden horse. Their enemies, the Trojans, thinking the horse to be great fun, drew it into the beleaguered fortress. Once within the town, the Greeks emerged from the horse, opened the gates of Troy to their comrades, massacred the Trojans and captured the fortress which they had not been able to subdue for twelve years. This device has been used by the Communists on a thousand occasions all over the world,

and more often than not, it has succeeded due to the gullibility of politicians.

The Communists of Hyderabad, in pursuit of this technique, first endeared themselves to the progressive leaders of the Andhra Mahasabha, which was then operating from Vijayawada as a State Congress organization. Before long, Narayana Reddy was hailed as a great Congress worker on account of his energy and resourcefulness. But once he was elected the president of the Mahasabha, the Communists secured ascendancy in the organization, persecuted those of its members who had State Congress affiliations and drove them out of it.

During the years 1945, '46 and '47, the Communist Party of India, under orders from the International Organization sponsored by the U. S. S. R., had to stage several retreats and make many compromises. When World War II began, it was for them an object of Abhorrence, the war of the imperialist Allies. I remember the discussions I had with various Communist leaders in Bombay in the first year of the War, when some of us were looking forward to their joining the local Congress for an anti-British drive.

When the U.S.S.R. joined the Allies overnight, the war became the People's War for the Communists all over the world as well as the Communist Party in India. Their Fatherland's entry more than justified them in lending their whole-hearted support to the British Government which was then suppressing the 'Quit India' movement for national freedom.

When at length the British did decide to 'quit' India, the Party, under instructions from the Communist Party of Great Britain, gave support to the Nehru Government, which, it declared was more progressive than that of Pakistan.

The Andhra Mahasabha and the Communist Party of Hyderabad, both agencies of the Communist Party, began their work in close alliance. The Communist Party of Hyderabad restricted itself to infiltrating the State Congress, the trade unions, the Students' Association and even the Ittehad. The Mahasabha took charge of the rural areas and launched a vigorous campaign in the districts of Nalgonda and Warangal against the feudal barons and the landlords for whom there was plenty of dislike in the villages.

There were enough grievances in Hyderabad to delight the Communist heart. The controls and other restrictive

measures such as the levy of foodgrains, introduced on account of World War II, were being enforced by corrupt officials and had created universal discontent. The Mahasabha, therefore, with characteristic energy, formed village *sanghs*, enrolling as members not only the unruly and discontented elements, but the peasants, petty landlords and merchants. Unwilling villagers were intimidated into joining them and dissidents were man-handled or were visited with penalties such as being prevented from grazing their cattle in their own field.

As the *sanghs* grew strong, they took violent action against anyone who came in the way of their activities and particularly the village officers. By November, 1946, the Communists had obtained control of several villages, rendering them inaccessible to the State officials.

During the time Sir Mirza was the Prime Minister, the Nizam's Government made feeble attempts to bring the Communist lawlessness under control. A commission was appointed to enquire into its extent. As a result, some of the leaders were punished; the lands of some of them were confiscated for grave acts of violence. But as soon as action was taken against them, they went underground, or crossed over to Vijayawada, from which place they continued to direct their operations.

The Communist movement in Hyderabad was only a part of the larger movement which was sponsored by the Communist Party of India, which in its turn obeyed the mandates from a foreign authority.

For four years or more, the C. P. I. had functioned as a lawful organization; that was their reward for having given unstinted support to the British Government against the Congress-sponsored movement for national freedom.

During those days the C. P. I. infiltrated different organizations, secured numerous sympathisers, strengthened its financial position and perfected its propaganda machinery. It also acquired a firm base among the industrial workers and the students, and some little hold on certain sections of the middle classes.

When Gandhiji came out of jail in 1944, he saw the dangers to which the national movement was exposed at the hands of the resurrected Communist Party. In his positive way he

soon isolated the Communists and got rid of such of them as had infiltrated the Congress organizations.

By the middle of 1947, however, the Communists openly started a campaign of violence in many parts of the country. As they had expected a general chaos to follow the transfer of power to Indian hands, they had drawn up a detailed scheme for the subversion of law and order. They believed, as did many British statesmen and officers, that the Nehru Government would never gather sufficient strength to overcome the confusion which would follow, and as the natural heirs of Stalin, they expected to inherit India.

As a precautionary measure, however, many of the Communist leaders had gone underground and instructions had been issued to the provincial branches and district centres to prepare an underground organisation for each area and to the leaders to go underground whenever necessary. This was not difficult, because during the time when the C. P. I. was functioning as a lawful party, it had established contact with many Government employees. As a result, top-secret and confidential circulars and orders were made accessible to them as soon as they were issued.

The C. P. I. had secured a strong foothold in the South. It had staged successful strikes in the textile mills at Madras; incited strikes among the Malabar special police and the jail warders in the Cannanore Central Jail; and even induced the Police of Madras City to refuse to accept their pay. In Malabar it had incited the ryots to attempt forcible occupation of lands owned by others and when the police appeared on the scene to restore order, pitched battles with guns and spears followed. In Tanjore, the cultivators were prevented from sowing seed or reaping the harvest.

Sri Prakasam, then the Chief Minister of Madras, stated: 'The Communists, for months, had been fomenting trouble in a number of districts and lately in Malabar and Tanjore they had taken the law into their own hands and adopted terroristic methods, taking forcible possession of lands and looting and setting fire to property.'

When in July, 1947, the ban on the State Congress was lifted, it emerged as the most popular party in the State and the Communists hurried to give it support.

When *Satyagraha* was launched on the twin issues of the

State's accession to India and the introduction of a responsible Government in the State, the Communist workers adopted the United Front technique. In the guise of Congressmen they intensified the State Congress struggle, particularly in the areas which they dominated. In the villages in which they operated they planted the National Flag with or without the Red Flag and trained people to defy the law and commit acts of violence.

Sailing on the tide of Congress popularity, they gained control of one village after another; the local squad of rowdy and illiterate villagers organized by them demolished customs outposts in the border villages, made forcible collections of money, arms and ammunition, looted or burnt property and killed the resisters. As a side activity, the members of the squads took the opportunity of wreaking vengeance on their personal enemies.

About December, 1947, another change came over the international policy of the Communists. The Ukraine had been denied a seat on the Security Council of the United Nations Organization, and the proposal for the Little Assembly had been adopted against the wishes of the U. S. S. R. Russia, therefore, decided to break with the Democracies, and the Communist parties in all democratic countries were instructed to accept a militant programme. The Western powers immediately became wicked imperialist warmongers as far as the Communists were concerned, and the Nehru Government nothing but their stooge.

About the same time, P. T. Randive came forward as the advocate of a militant policy of violent insurrection and guerilla warfare against the Government of India. Its goal was to establish a 'democratic revolution by overthrowing the Nehru Government.'

When, with the aid of the Razakars, the Nizam's Government tried to suppress the Congress activities of the State, its wing led by Swami Ramanand Tirtha shifted its offices to the border villages of the Union districts. The so-called *Satyagraha* which was conducted by the State Congress was scarcely of the Gandhian variety. In view of the ruthless manner in which the Razakars behaved, it was well-nigh impossible to practise it in Hyderabad. The villagers, harassed by the Razakars, needed the power to resist, not the joy of martyrdom.

More often than not, therefore, the Communists, as partners in the United Front, assumed control of the violent movement of resistance organized by the villagers against the Nizam's police and the Razakars.

Possessing modern weapons, the Communists never lacked funds. In case of need they could always replenish their war chest by a raid or two on the houses of the wealthy in the rural areas. Their squads were strictly organized and led by trained personnel, some of whom were discharged ex-army men.

The State Congress workers inside the State often worked in alliance with these squads, but were soon eliminated. In the areas under their own influence, the Communists would not permit the Congress workers even to appear.

As the depredations of the Razakars increased in intensity, the villagers invited the Communists to take the lead and supply them with arms. The village squads soon established centres of resistance and gave battle to the armed forces of the State and the Razakars.

This was also in line with the Communist technique practised in many other lands. During World War II, the Communists, in face of the Fascist menace, had loudly proclaimed their hatred of Fascism in several countries in Europe and been accepted by the democrats as brave and loyal allies. By joining the resistance movements, they redeemed their reputation as patriots. This also enabled them to infiltrate the ranks of the nationalists and entrench themselves into strong positions in the country; for, their methods were swift and unscrupulous and could always show immediate results. In this way, they impressed those that followed them and easily induced belief in the democrats that a United Front would serve the cause of liberty better than an unaided national effort.

In every case such an alliance had proved dangerous to national interests later and half the tragedy of the post-war world can be traced to this technique. I, therefore, warned some of the Congress workers of the danger that lay in associating themselves with the Communists in a resistance movement based on brutal violence.

In January, 1948, when I went to Hyderabad, the Communists had acquired a hold over more or less contiguous areas comprising the districts of Nalgonda and Warangal in Hydera-

bad and of Krishna, Guntur, East Godavari and West Godavari in the province of Madras,

When I went touring through Hyderabad as far as Vijayawada, I found that the United Front technique had paid heavy dividends to the Communists in the shape of general support given to the resistance movement in Hyderabad led by them. Most of the Hindus in Hyderabad, many Congressmen in the Telugu-speaking districts of Madras and some of the officials of that province, were against the banning of Communist activities in the border districts of Madras. Indeed, many of them favoured the United Front on the plea that but for it Telengana would be at the mercy of the Razakars.

At Vijayawada I also met some of the Communist leaders and had conversations with them. They were frank both as to their goal and programme though they exaggerated their achievements. They had complete control, they said, of the Telugu-speaking districts both inside and outside Hyderabad and their hearts were set on winning an Andhra Province for Communism. It was painful to see that many leading Congressmen, in their blissful ignorance of the role of the C. P. I. in India, wished them godspeed.

Nothing succeeds like success, and the Communists had proved that those of the villages in Nalgonda and Warangal that were held by them were completely immune from the attentions of the Razakars.

The Razakars were, therefore, not merely a danger in themselves, but by giving scope to the Communists and bringing them the general support of the public, were the potential architects of a countrywide chaos.

CHAPTER XIII

BREAKING THE RING-FENCE

THE Nizam's Government decided to isolate me. The only persons with whom I was to be allowed to keep contact were Laik Ali and Moin Nawaz Jung.

It was not a pleasant experience to be preceded or followed by the Razakar cyclists in the public streets. It was only when I went to see Laik Ali that I was free from their attentions. I therefore restricted myself largely to the *Dakshina Sadan* grounds.

I told Sardar that I was like 'Sita sitting alone in the Ashoka Vana.' But as I have already stated, the ring-fence was destined to be broken. I made it a point to receive many people almost daily. They were my eyes and ears. In a very short time, scarcely anything happened to the Nizam, Laik Ali or Razvi, without my coming to know of it within forty-eight hours.

As a matter of courtesy, I called on the Prince of Berar and his younger brother, Muazzam Jah. Later, when the Princess of Berar arrived from abroad and my wife happened to be in Hyderabad, I informed the Prince that we should like to call on him and the Princess. In reply, I received a significant message through his secretary: 'Please do not trouble to call on us. You are a leading man from India; I am the Prince of Berar; but I dare not meet you freely, much as I wish to; I will have to take the permission of the Nizam, and permission will be given only if his spy is allowed to be present at our interview. This is undignified for both of us.'

I called on Sir Salar Jung, the principal nobleman of Hyderabad. I had known him before but slightly. He took me to his private room and whispered, 'Mr. Munshi, these people will never accede. Our lives and properties are at the mercy of Razvi. If you want to solve the problem, do not remove the army from Secunderabad. I have served the State for years; I am the premier nobleman; but all the time I am afraid for my life.'

While bidding me good-bye he said that he would return my visit when he felt safe, but not before. After a few months,

when he did return the visit, he was emotionally worked up and told me that he had to carry a revolver in case he was attacked.

Another highly placed Hindu *jagirdar*, a man of culture, buried himself in a splendid library, the care of which he made the sole ostensible occupation of his life. When I met him, he whispered to me that he would not be able to return my visit. 'You know the reason, Mr. Munshi', was what he said.

The Raja of Vanaparty, the biggest Hindu *jagirdar* in the State, was a young man with pro-Indian leaning who met me several times. He was a suspect and persecuted throughout 1948.

Within a few days of my arrival I learnt that orders had been issued to the courtiers and high officials not to keep social contact with me without obtaining previous permission from the King Kothi. Deen Yar Jung was permitted to accept my invitation to lunch, but not Hosh Yar Jung. Some of the leading Hindus—except the State Congress leaders—also hesitated to meet me at first.

It was impossible for me to function in Hyderabad if I was to be socially isolated in this way. I therefore ordered the most lavish hospitality and invited people to lunch, tea and dinner. When the guests came, I let myself go. I cracked jokes, told interesting anecdotes and established friendly relations. At times I was bored to death with having to smile and talk pleasantly, but friendliness gradually broke down the barriers of fear and distrust. Soon the authorities had quite a hard time to keep pace with what was happening in the *Dakshina Sadan*.

The Nizam had a universal system of espionage. He planted his spies on everybody, his son, his ministers, his enemies, his important officers. The compliment was returned by the princes as well as by some of the ministers, the important officers and men of position, all of whom had their spies in the King Kothi.

The most extraordinary thing about this espionage was that some of the persons employed in the King Kothi were in the pay of several persons at the same time. Every day they reported to their different paymasters what was happening there, what conversations the Nizam held and with whom. It was most interesting to receive the report of the

same incident or the same conversation from several different sources and quite an exercise in the scrutiny of evidence to compare garbled versions given by the same witnesses, when conveyed to me through different men.

Within a month I had to get rid of two or three of my servants who were caught spying on me or listening to my private conversations.

About this time a very rich story came to my ears. I do not vouch for it, though it emanated from a palace source. Day after day Hyderabad regaled itself with stories about the Nizam. Some of them were doubtless invented, but they were mostly accepted because they were so credible.

On one occasion, the Nizam wanted his guards to show him their tiffin carriers which were found to contain only the scanty fare of the low paid servant. He was reported to have told one of his courtiers: 'See, in the days of the Residents these fellows used to have a nice tiffin in the carriers. The Residents used to pay them well. But this Munshi is a *bania*. He has been paying them nothing. How can these *banias* rule?'

The Nizam's police also set their spies on me. The sub-inspector of police who was guarding the *Dakshina Sadan*, ostensibly for my security, kept a close watch on me and my visitors and tried to corrupt the servants. Some plain-clothed men were also posted a little distance away. Razvi, not to be outdone, had several men of his own posted at near the *Dakshina Sadan*. The whole situation recalled Vishakhadatt's play, *Mudra Rakshasa*.

Many people had a grouse against the Laik Ali Ministry; some of them, attached to the Nizam himself, were at logger-heads with each other; they were therefore ready to dovetail what they knew. Various favourites of the Nizam or Kasim Razvi, having found that I was accessible, came to pick up information and to keep open the two-way traffic left some information with me.

Meanwhile, several of the leading men with whom I had established friendly contact, kept me posted with everything of importance.

The Hindus—except the Ittehad Harijans—were all anxious for deliverance and ready to help.

Colonel Waghray, the physician of the Nizam and the lead-

ing medical practitioner in Hyderabad, was also my physician. We soon became friends and apart from reporting political happenings he had good deal to say about the social side of the King Kothi. But he had to pay dearly for this. In a few months, the Nizam's wrath descended upon him and his services were dispensed with. Thereafter the atmosphere grew so hot for him that he had to leave Hyderabad for his home in Uttar Pradesh, there to await the day when he could return without danger to himself.

Waghray had left Hyderabad. I sent for the physician who was said to have the next best reputation, but three calls, including a personal one by a member of my staff in a car, found him away from home. From then on I was looked after by old Dr. Naidu (the late Sarojini Devi's husband), though he had given up practice many years before.

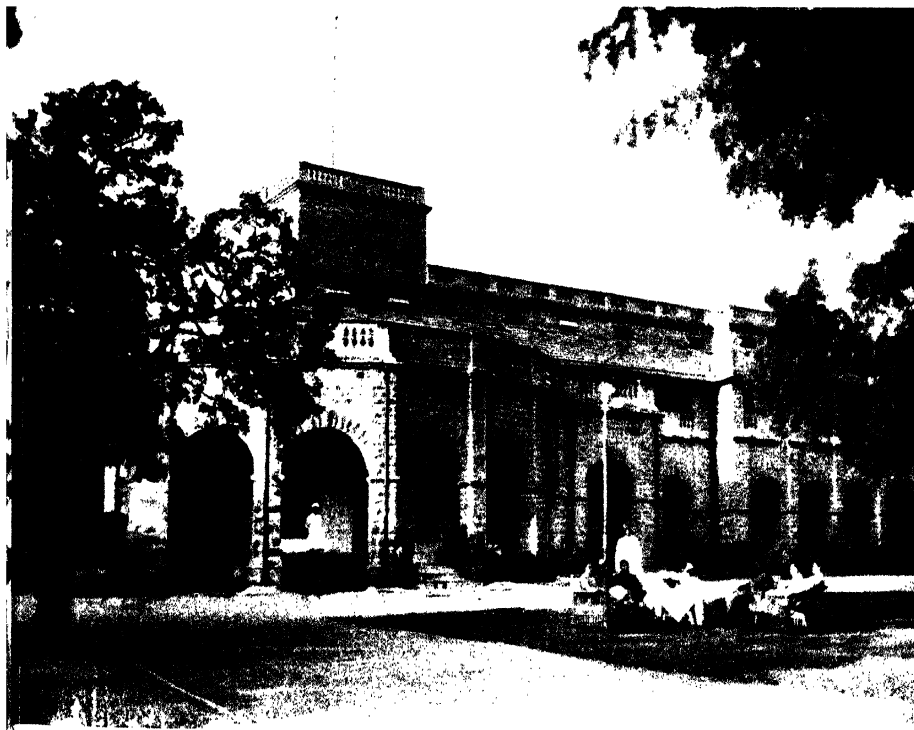
Z, a highly placed officer, was the most courageous of the whole lot. In spite of the interdict, he visited me freely. He knew the Hyderabad set-up inside out and though he was having hard time, he took bold risks. Later on a stage was reached when the Nizam himself warned him against keeping contact with me, but before Laik Ali could take drastic steps against him, he took leave on the pretext of being ill and left for Bombay. As his luck would have it, there the police suspected him of being a spy of the Nizam and detained him in jail. His wife was furious, and when one evening she invaded the *Dakshina Sadan*, she cried with blazing eyes. 'What is this strange world! In Hyderabad my husband is a spy for India and in Bombay for Hyderabad.' I was able to intervene with the Home Minister of Bombay, who was good enough to release Z.

Pannalal Pittie, the leading businessman in Hyderabad, had a cool head and was a very shrewd judge of men. He was friendly with the leading Hindus and Muslims; his sphere of influence was wide. I had known the Pittie family since 1914 and Pannalal since he was a boy. It was in a partition suit filed by his eldest brother against the other members of his family that in 1920 I, as his counsel, won my place among the leading counsels on the Original Side of the Bombay Bar.

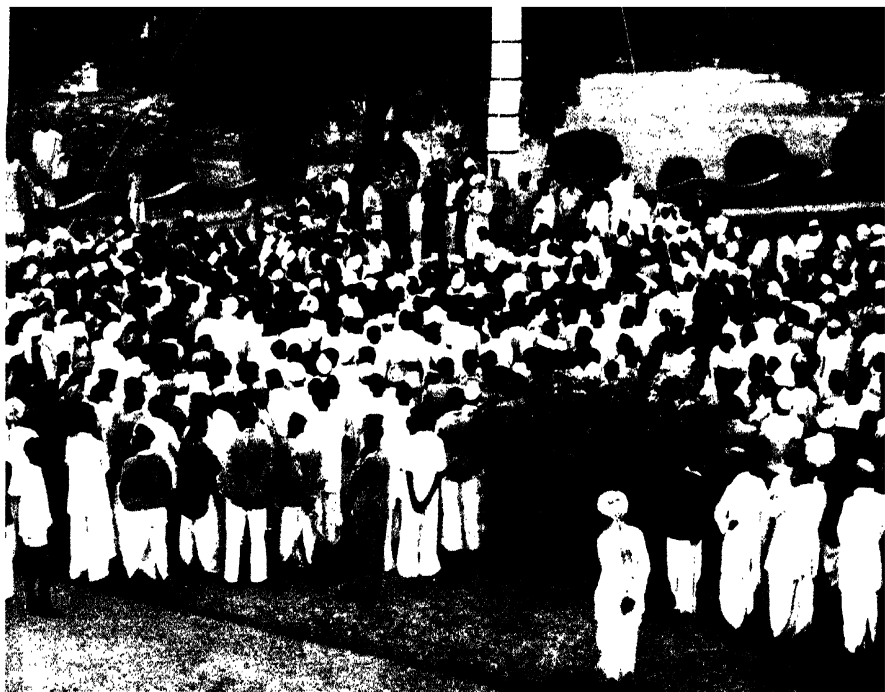
I would never have been able to break the ring-fence without the help of Laxminivas Ganeriwal. He tried to help me for all he was worth by collecting information from various



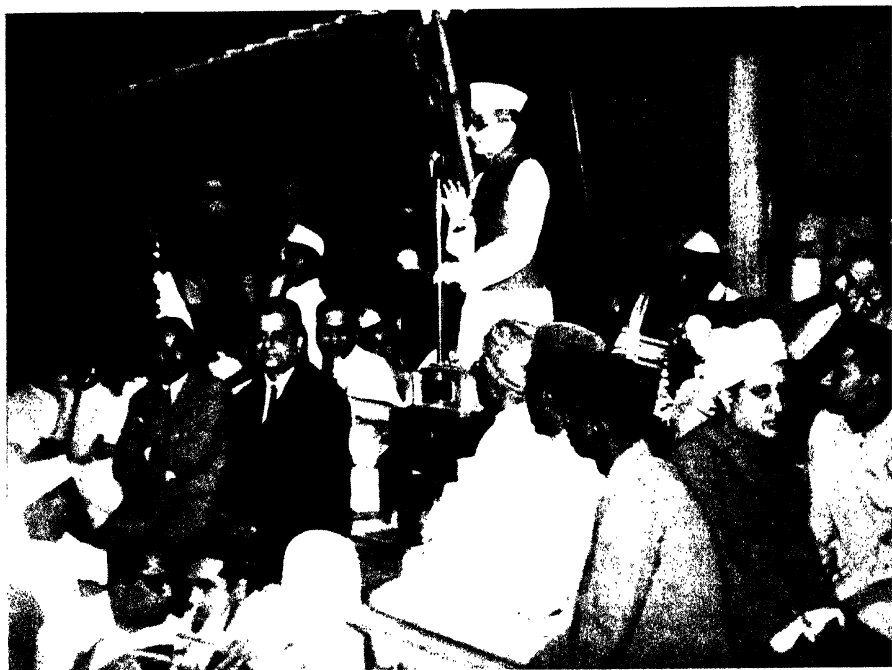
The author's arrival at Hakimpeth airport on January 5, 1948.



The author and his staff in the lawns of "Dakshina Sadan"



Flag Salutation at Bolarum Residency.



The author speaking at the Citizens' Reception in his honour at Secunderabad Race Course, Swami Ramananda Tirtha presiding.

sources and giving it to me. At one stage, even the State Congress circles began to suspect his *bona fides*, for they did not know that most of his comings and goings were undertaken at my suggestion. There came a time, too, when Laik Ali went so far as to offer him a ministership; but, this he declined. He was public-spirited and soft-hearted and often went out of his way to bring relief to some harassed member of the public.

Raja Bahadur Aravamudu Iyengar was in a class by himself. A sound lawyer, a shrewd politician and a resourceful man, he had worked himself out of numberless awkward situations and survived every crisis in Hyderabad for years past. The Nizam often asked his advice, though he never accepted it. Iyengar kept himself in close touch with all that was happening in Hyderabad and his knowledge and advice stood me in good stead throughout.

The correspondents of the Associated Press of India, the United Press of India and the *Hindu* were brave and intelligent young men who often collected reports at grave risks to themselves and kept in close touch with me.

The most courageous of them was Shastri, a Hindu journalist of Hyderabad. He was a sort of confidential secretary to Venkatarao, the Harijan Minister, and was also in Razvi's confidence, doing some English work for him.

In February, this young man came to see me and begged me to find a job for him outside Hyderabad. He was sick of things, he said, and wanted to get out of the State. I very nearly fixed him up with a newspaper in Madras. I suggested to him that he would be rendering a great service to India and to me if he continued to maintain his confidential relations with the inner circle of the Ittehad. Shastri agreed.

Thereafter he visited me off and on as a journalist. Razvi thought that he was spying on me. But till the end, he was loyal to the core and never asked me to do him a favour. Of him, more hereafter.

Many sensible Muslims were very much perturbed that the destinies of Hyderabad had been placed at the mercy of the Ittehad. They belonged to one of three groups: those who clearly perceived that Hyderabad would lose in the end; those who were disgusted with the existing regime; and the very few who, though loyal to the Nizam, believed that Hyderabad's

interests lay in acceding to India. Most of them maintained touch with me.

Of the Muslims, who, from the beginning, saw that the salvation of Hyderabad and of the Nizam lay in acceding to India, Nawab Manzur Jung was the most courageous. He was sensible, wise and selfless. But he carried the hostility of the Ittehad. Before I went to Hyderabad he had often remonstrated with the Nizam about the suicidal course which he was pursuing.

Manzur Jung often met me and introduced me to several of his Muslim friends such as Dildar Hussain, a retired Chief Engineer, who held the same views as he did. About March, the Ittehad leaders induced the Nizam not to let Manzur Jung pay frequent visits to the King Kothi. Soon the time came when he had to pay the price for his bold stand.

I liked this simple-hearted straightforward man. Soon after the Police Action, he died. And when, as the Food Minister of the Government of India, I visited an integrated Hyderabad which had been purged of the Ittehad, I went to his house to offer my condolences to his widow.

It was Manzur Jung who introduced me to the brave young Muslim nationalist, Sheobullah Khan, editor of the Urdu paper, *Imroze*, through the columns of which he fought the Ittehad with rare courage. Ultimately, he paid for it with his life.

Of the other Muslims, the most helpful was Nawab Hosh Yar Jung, the Nizam's favourite courtier, whom Deen looked upon as his inveterate enemy. He had a rare command of Urdu and, with his keen wit, could play a court jester when it suited him to keep the Nizam in good humour. In spite of what looked like an irresponsible way of talking, he was shrewd and far-sighted. He worked throughout in the interests of the Nizam, for he honestly believed that the salvation of the Asafia dynasty lay in making friends with the Union. Sir Mirza also had great confidence in him and it is likely that he was invited to be the Prime Minister of Hyderabad through Hosh's influence.

Hosh was never allowed by the Nizam to meet me, let alone to accept my invitations to lunch. However, one night at 2 A.M. my A.D.C. woke me up to say that Nawab Hosh Yar Jung had come to see me. Imagine my surprise when I saw

a man bare-headed, wearing a *kurta* and *pyjama*. He had escaped attention with the greatest difficulty and had slipped into the *Dakshina Sadan* by the servants' door.

We had a long talk on the occasion; from thereon it was through him that I had a peep into the Nizam's mind, as it changed from day to day. He loved the Nizam, was anxious to save him from the Ittehad group and was trying his best—of course behind the back of Deen—to get the Nizam to meet me.

Once Hosh came to ask me—as usual after midnight—whether I would accept Nizam's invitation to dinner on the occasion of the death anniversary of his mother.

'Of course, I will', I said.

Hosh settled the programme of the dinner with me and told me what I had to do on such a ceremonial occasion. I should have to present a *chaddar* (bed-sheet) of flowers for the tomb. I was also told that I would receive the invitation within two or three days.

However no invitation came. A few days later, on one of his midnight visits, Hosh explained to me why it had not materialised. The Nizam had issued orders to send me an invitation but both Laik Ali and Deen had persuaded him to rescind it.

'Munshi is a dangerous man. It is no use meeting him', they had said.

Hosh could not be beaten at courtiership.

'Does Ala Hazrat realise what the Nawab Saheb is insinuating?' he had enquired in courtly Urdu. 'He means to say that Ala Hazrat is so weak and unintelligent that if he were to talk to Munshi, even on a ceremonial occasion, he would immediately lose his senses and do what Munshi told him. What a tribute to Ala Hazrat!'

Deen had won. The order for the issue of the invitation had been cancelled.

Throughout my stay in the State, the Nizam never gave me an opportunity of meeting him. Nawab Ali Yavar Jung, once the Minister of Constitutional Affairs of the Nizam and a shrewd observer, wrote about the position in which I was placed in his *Hyderabad in Retrospect*:—

'It was decreed in Mr. Munshi's horoscope that Hyderabad would make decennial entries into his life. It made its first

entry in 1938, when as Home Minister of Bombay, he was called upon to deal with the repercussions of the Arya Satyagraha in the Province of Bombay. The second entry was in 1948, when Mr. Munshi arrived at Hyderabad as Agent-General of India. The mission began badly, when an unnecessary controversy over a building which, it was feared, had not been sufficiently fumigated to destroy the germs of Paramountcy, and it was believed they would infect Mr. Munshi. So, in the interests of Mr. Munshi's political health, a safer abode was chosen for him and "Deccan House" of the old Cantonment days became the *Dakshina Sadan* of India's Agent-General.

'It was natural that the relations between Shah Manzil and *Dakshina Sadan* should reflect the changes in the Delhi-Hyderabad barometer and, as the latter began to record tension, the former showed signs of strain. Not so the relations between Hyderabad's Agent-General in Delhi and the Government of India. To Zain Yar Jung's social gifts was added the advantage of having been kept out of the negotiations by the powers in Hyderabad; he thus remained happily unaffected by any rise or fall in the political barometer. Mr. Munshi's position was different; he was in the thick of the discussions. So, while Zain Yar Jung, under forced unconcern, continued successfully to cultivate goodwill, Mr. Munshi found that type of agriculture unsuited to the climate which then prevailed in Hyderabad. He, therefore, decided to go into intellectual exile and chose the realm of historical fiction. *Dakshina Sadan* was under a cloud and even invitees to such functions as the eating of vegetarian dishes and the drinking of pure water were treated as suspects, whether they accepted the invitation or not. There was masterly inactivity in Mr. Munshi's seclusion, for he kept himself informed of all events and trends of thought, and he tried till September 11, when he had his last dinner with Mir Laik Ali, to obtain a settlement.

'In Delhi, Hyderabad's Agent-General had free access to the Governor-General and the Ministers, and no secretaries dogged his footsteps by their presence at interviews: in Hyderabad, Mr. Munshi's access to the Nizam was barred and bolted. Long arguments took place between the Nizam and his Ministers, with the former insisting on seeing Mr. Munshi alone and the latter persisting in denying him that freedom unless one of them was present. Even the compromise of the Nizam's

own Secretary being present was unacceptable to the Ministers who seemed fundamentally opposed to the idea of two men taking tea together. One such scene was pitiable to watch, with the Nizam literally pleading and suggesting alternatives. It was obvious that the constitution had undergone a change; the Nizam had now to possess the confidence of his Ministers. So, Mr. Munshi could never meet the Nizam alone—not until the fateful afternoon of September 17, 1948, when the two men met at last, and, later in the evening a nervous and broken voice spoke for the first time over the radio to the people of his fallen State and referred to “my friend, Mr. Munshi”.

Nawab Ali Yavar Jung was reputed to be the ablest man in Hyderabad. Shrewd realist that he was, he had retired to a watchful political exile. The Ittehad leaders hated him for the reasons that he was a Shia; he had clearly seen the necessity of Indo-Hyderabad friendship by early accession; and more particularly the Nizam had recurring fits of confidence in him.

I met Ali Yavar Jung and his charming wife on several occasions. Our contact, however, was studiously social and we tacitly avoided all conversation about current affairs. It was only at times that I received hints which were reported to have come from him.

His father-in-law, Sir Mehdi Yar Jung, an ex-Prime Minister, and his wife were two of the finest persons I ever met. In them, I glimpsed the exquisite courtesy and mature wisdom which were associated with the old aristocratic traditions of Hyderabad.

Lady Yar Jung had a modest dignity and refined grace, the like of which I had never seen in anyone before. My relations with them were very cordial, and on one or two occasions, Sir Mehdi, now weak and ailing, told me how heart-broken he felt at the way things were developing.

He lay dying when I went to see him, and he insisted on seeing me alone.

‘Mr. Munshi’ he said, ‘he (evidently referring to the Nizam) is his own worst enemy. He is also surrounded by wicked men. Please help him.’ Sir Mehdi’s transparent loyalty was moving in its deep earnestness. I believe he died a few days afterwards.

It was, however, most difficult to help the Nizam. He had worked himself into an impossible frame of mind.

When the Residencies had been denied to me, the Nizam's Government had offered me one of the two houses, Greenlands and Rocklands, as my town residence and office. But I had already made up my mind that I would continue to reside at *Dakshina Sadan*. Laik Ali and I therefore came to the view that so fine a residential building as Greenlands should not be wasted on offices. So we selected Rocklands for me.

Mir Laik Ali and I went over Rocklands and everything was settled to our mutual satisfaction. A part of the house was whitewashed and one of my officers shifted there.

Suddenly the Nizam raised objections to my occupying Rocklands. It was situated on the main road by which he went to the mosque every week when he would be compelled to let His Exalted eyes rest on the National Flag flying on the house. It would be an affront!

With profuse apologies Laik Ali asked me to select another building. I knew the reason why I was denied Rocklands and declined to do so. The Government had offered Rocklands to me; I had accepted it and all but moved into it; there was no reasonable excuse for not giving it to me.

Our differences on this point only ended when every public building in Hyderabad was flying the National Flag.

CHAPTER XIV

THE GREAT MARTYRDOM

MY staff consisted of an odd assortment. Raghupati, my Private Secretary, was a fresh I.A.S. from Orissa, Raju, a seasoned I.C.S. who had been lent by Madras, was my Secretary. Major Nanda, the Deputy Secretary, was in charge of Military Intelligence. Venkatavardhan, the officer in charge of Civil Intelligence, was unobtrusive and clear-headed, and moved from contact to contact collecting the most valuable information which he sorted and presented with rare clarity.

With the first week one of the officers raised a serious problem for me. His idea was to worm out military intelligence by means of lavish drinks. One day I learnt to my horror that he had bought half-a-dozen bottles of whisky from the Secunderabad Military Canteen in my name. I shuddered to think what Bapu, sitting in Delhi, would think, if he came to know that I was strengthening my position with alcohol. He might even go on a fast. Thunder and lightning followed. The five bottles which were still intact were returned to the canteen and the unfinished one was transferred to the name of the officer.

The greatest problem was X. Not being a regular officer, he felt that he was on a special mission himself. Having supreme confidence in himself, he was convinced that he, of all others, represented Gandhiji and Sardar. Naturally, therefore, he assumed supreme command of my Secretariat. Raju, not knowing exactly where he stood, submitted to the assumption.

Without my knowledge, X established contact with Laik Ali and created an impression that he was the proper man with whom negotiations should be held. I soon discovered that something serious was going on behind my back. One of the members of the Cabinet sent me word that I should be careful, because, while discussing the state of negotiations with Delhi, Laik Ali had told his colleagues that he had established contact with Gandhiji's most trusted man in the

Agent-General's office, who alone had the power to deliver the goods.

About January 27, I was going to Delhi when Laik Ali said he was going too. X also begged me to let him go, but in advance; I knew what he was up to; he was going there to arrange a meeting between Laik Ali and Gandhiji. The day before I was to leave Bolarum he remained in his room pleading illness and after meeting me, Laik Ali went to him and had a long talk.

I reached Delhi on the morning of the 29th and put up as usual at Birla House. Gandhiji and his entourage were the only other guests, the host himself being absent.

When V. P. Menon and C. C. Desai met me, they told me that X had complained to Sardar that I was taking the wrong line, and that he, X, was trying to save the situation.

In the evening I went to report to Gandhiji on what was happening in Hyderabad. He heard me patiently. With his usual candour, a quality which made him so dear to us all, he said: 'Munshi, you promised me that you would make the utmost effort to negotiate a settlement. From your conversation I find that you are doing all you can, while X tells me that you are taking a wrong line. Why does he say that?'

I was equally frank. I told him all about X. 'You asked me to go to Hyderabad, Bapu, and I went there at considerable risk. I took X with me only because of our common loyalty to you. If you are dissatisfied with me, you have only to say the word and I shall come away. But you will agree with me that I cannot let anyone, much less an officer of mine, behave in the way X has been doing. Either I am in charge or he is. Do you consider his conduct proper?'

'I was surprised at it myself,' Gandhiji admitted.

'But do you think I should keep him with me in the difficult situation I am facing there?'

'You can ask Sardar to remove him,' said Gandhiji.

Then Laik Ali arrived. I introduced him to Gandhiji and left. Our next business appointment was for 7 P.M. on the 30th, But I was not destined to keep it.

On the afternoon of the 30th I had long talks about the situation with Sardar, whom I found in a very unhappy mood. He had been undergoing almost unbearable strain for days.

For the first time in thirty years, differences had arisen between him and Gandhiji, who had made distant references to them in his afternoon prayer speeches. Even Sardar had hinted at them in a speech in Bombay.

Throughout the previous year, Sardar had borne a very heavy load on his shoulders. He had taken great decisions and implemented them with vigour. He had seen the wisdom of Partition and had accepted it. He had directed the work of several Ministries and had solved most of the complicated problems resulting from Partition. He had borne the brunt of the crisis created by the in-coming refugees and by the weakening order of the country. With a swift and almost super-human statesmanship unknown in our history, he had consolidated India as never before; had converted the Indian Princes into loyal friends and had performed the miracle of evolving a strong India out of the fragments which the British had left behind. He had also earned the unstinted loyalty of the civil service which was new alike to the Congress leaders and to the problems of the post-freedom era.

In addition, he had guided the work of the Chief Ministers in all the States, had helped to establish stability in the country and had run the huge Congress organisation which was now denied the direct guidance of Gandhiji. All this burden he had borne with outstanding courage, but these differences were becoming too heavy for him. If my impression is correct, he had sent in his resignation as a Minister to Gandhiji a few days before.

At the end I also told him about X and my talks with Gandhiji. His reaction was one of anger. He said: 'I will tell Menon to remove him.'

After I left him Sardar did in fact go to Birla House and discussed with Gandhiji the sinister campaign that was being carried on against him. He was, they had said, the arch-Communist. He was the wicked one, who was undoing all the great work of the Congress!

This kind of whispering campaign was not an unusual feature of Congress life in those days. By means of whispers and insinuations, circulated from mouth to mouth, a Congressman whom you did not approve of could easily be dubbed a 'Communist'. When spoken with a certain accent the word conveyed the sense which the *Shastras* conveyed by the word

patit or fallen from high estate; that is, he was a reactionary, a traitor to the Congress, which meant, to the country: *Q.E.D.*! Many a man had been damned by such whispers. This time the target was very high indeed. Gandhiji was deeply concerned about it; he was anxious that nothing should divide the Sardar and Panditji for in their unity lay the future of the country.

The talk between Gandhiji and Sardar took longer than had been expected. Gandhiji, always so meticulous about time, was rather late for the prayers. He got up hurriedly and prepared himself. With his hands placed as usual on the shoulders of his grand-daughter-in-law, Abha, and his grand-daughter Manu, he proceeded, as was his wont, from the rear door of his room to the spot where the prayers were held in the Birla House gardens.

Suddenly, a man broke through the ranks of the people who were standing reverently on either side with folded hands. He appeared to fall at Gandhiji's feet. One of the girls tried to prevent him from doing so, but the man pushed her aside. Gandhiji's prayer book and rosary, which were in her hands, fell to the ground and she stooped to pick them up.

The man faced Gandhiji, whipped out a pistol and fired three shots in quick succession. At the first, Gandhiji staggered. At the second, he collapsed. On his lips were the words he loved most: '*He Rama*'.

The gardener of Birla House tried to stop the assailant; others overpowered him. Two bullets passed through the abdomen and came out at the back; the third one remained lodged in the lungs.

Thus the mighty one fell.

From Sardar's office I had gone to the States Ministry to meet V. P. Menon. It must have been at about 5-30 P.M. when, as I was coming down the staircase of the Secretariat, I met one of the chauffeurs from Birla House. He was climbing the stairs, two steps at a time.

'Come, Sir, come! Gandhiji has been killed', he cried, I thought he was mad.

We rushed to Birla House. When I reached Gandhiji's room, he was lying on the bed, with blood trickling from his side. Sardar sat close by, with an arm round the shoulders

of a sobbing Panditji. Abha and Manu were weeping hysterically; Maniben was reciting the *Bhagavad-Gita*. Dr. Jivraj had just finished examining Gandhiji. Pyarelal was sitting on one side of the bed watching Gandhiji with anxious eyes. Further off, a little group sat huddled.

I sat down near Sardar. The doctor who was examining Gandhiji got up. 'No use', he said, and shook his head.

I was dazed. I could not think; it was all so unreal.

I had looked in for a few seconds in the morning to pay my respects before I left. Hale and hearty, he was writing something. He had smiled at me and had accepted my *namaskar* with the familiar wave of his hand.

Now, 'no use!' I was dry-eyed. The emotion which moves the heart and brings tears was numb. The silence of the room was broken by sobs and chanting.

Congress leaders, ministers and others began to arrive. No member of the Birla family was there at the time, so I collected the servants, had the compound gate closed against the gathering crowd and requested various friends to stand there to let in persons of importance. Meanwhile the police had arrived and taken charge.

The first impact of the event was terrible. We had been told that the assailant was a Muslim. This opened up a ghastly prospect; the next day rivers of blood would flow both in India and Pakistan. Then, on inquiry, I was assured by the Birla House gardener, who claimed to have caught the assailant, that the murderer was a Hindu.

My memory went back to a conversation which Bapu had had with some of us months before.

Someone had said, 'A Muslim will kill you some day, Bapu'.

'No Muslim will ever kill me', he said. 'If I am murdered, it will be by the hand of a Hindu.' His perspicacity was almost prophetic.

A little later, some of us met in the Library. I remember only Lord Mountbatten, Panditji, Sardar, Maulana Saheb, Gadgil, Jivraj, besides myself, being present; but there were several others also.

'We must arrange for his lying-in-state for a few days', suggested Lord Mountbatten. 'People could then come from all parts of the country to offer him their last homage.'

Some of us demurred. 'Hindu sentiment throughout the country would be offended', I said. 'It would be considered sacrilegious.'

Someone—it may have been Gadgil—said, 'If death has taken place after sunset, we can keep the dead body in the house no longer than the noon of the next day.'

In the meantime Pyarelal came in. 'Bapu told me definitely that after his death, he was to be cremated according to the Hindu rites', he said. That clinched the matter. The funeral was fixed for the next morning.

H. M. Patel, a military officer and I went to select the spot where cremation should take place. We selected the Rajghat as it could accommodate a future monument, and that is where Gandhiji's *samadhi* stands at present.

I returned to Birla House at two in the morning. I could not close my eyes; I was too stunned. I went and sat for some time in the room where Gandhiji lay in rigid death.

The whole night long crowds were collecting outside. I found their shouts annoying. Surely they could feel the gravity, if not the solemnity, of the occasion. From early morning, they kept on arriving. They roamed through the house and pressed towards Gandhiji's room to have his last *darshan*. I posted volunteers to regulate the crowds, formed a queue of visitors to the room in which the body was lying, and had the remaining rooms locked up. I had to be, in Campbell-Johnson's words, 'a self-appointed organiser'. As the crowds outside the house were insisting on having a *darshan*, we took the body upstairs and placed it on a balcony. It was a frantic multitude of crying women, hysterical children, sobbing men and curious *darshan-wallas*.

At last we placed the body on a truck and covered it with the National Flag. Gandhiji's face was serene. His eyes appeared closed as if in prayer. Sardar and Gandhiji's son, Devadas, sat near the body, with Sardar Baldeo Singh in front. The girls stood by the side. The cortege moved on. We had arranged for the maintenance of order on the roads, but pressing, and ever more pressing crowds made it impossible to maintain it.

The cortege moved on through the Kingsway of Imperial Delhi with the military pomp of an Emperor's funeral. At the same time, the spontaneous grief of vast crowds made it what

in fact it was—the saviour's last journey. The greatest living man had walked out of life in a way few had done before him.

Sri Krishna had died full of age and divine honours, but by the arrow of an obscure hunter. Socrates had died of poison, the victim of the hatred of his own people. Jesus had died on the cross crucified by the venom of his own people.

Gandhiji also died at the hands of one of his own people, whom he had led from darkness unto light. But he died at the height of popularity and power and, while enjoying the spiritual leadership not only of India, but of the whole world. He died in a manner which befitted a spiritual leader of all times, while going to prayers, with the name of God on his lips.

As he lived, so he died—with majesty and grace—and the undying halo of a martyr was about him.

By that evening, when the funeral was over, I had recovered from the stunning effect of the blow. I felt alone, terrifically alone, almost desolate. For a moment I felt crushed. There was no one left to whose guidance and abiding affection I could look.

Panditji and Sardar also suddenly awoke to a new responsibility. They could not forsake the people who looked to them both for guidance.

In death, Gandhiji had worked a miracle, even as he had done so many times in life.

CHAPTER XV

TEMPO OF THE RAZAKARS

BEFORE I returned to Bolarum, Sardar went over the whole ground with me and indicated the line to be adopted. The first stage had passed. As the Nizam's Government had failed to observe the terms of the Standstill Agreement, it was no use discussing its implementation. He asked me to concentrate on negotiating a permanent settlement by the 31st of March. If that proved impossible, we should not go on waiting for ever, he said. The issue must be clinched, before the rains started in June; for by October, when the monsoon was over, a little time would have been left for the Standstill Agreement to run out.

In the meantime, Razvi had overstepped the bounds of decency by breaking up a large public meeting in the grounds of the Nizam's College to mourn Gandhiji's death. He also called for five lakhs of volunteers to be 'the liberators of the Muslims of India from the yoke of the Indian Union'.

At a public meeting on February 6, Moin Nawaz also defended the attitude of the Razakars. I inquired of Laik Ali what steps he was taking to prevent a recurrence of such anti-Indian activities, but no reply was vouchsafed.

It had been decided at New Delhi that Gandhiji's *asthis*—ashes containing small pieces of bones—should be distributed for ceremonial immersion in the different rivers of India at places held sacred in religious memory. I asked Devadas Gandhi to send some to me for immersion at the *Sangam*, at the confluence of two rivers, near Hyderabad.

Laik Ali was in a fix; neither he nor the Nizam wanted such an immersion ceremony to take place in Hyderabad: but the grief and devotion sweeping over the country were so universal that they could find no decent way to stop it.

On February 10, Srimati Gyan Kumari Heda, an enthusiastic social worker of Hyderabad, brought the ashes to Secunderabad. I received them at the station with due ceremony, a huge crowd being present to pay them homage.

For a day the *asthis* were kept in the *Dakshina Sadan*, *bhajans* were sung and the *Bhagavad Gita* recited continuously

for twenty-four hours. Crowds, both of Hindus and Muslims, poured in to have the *darshan* of the relics.

Even this solemn occasion had its humorous side. Joshi came in customary Gujarati mourning style, with a *dhoti* covering his head, wailing at the top of his voice. After spending a little time near the relics, he came to me on the first floor and expressed his grief in the loud wails and tragic utterances common among mourners of experience in Gujarat.

It was too much for my patience. 'Please don't cry so much. If you had had the least regard for Gandhiji you would not have stood by the Razakars who are inflicting such misery on innocent villagers,' I said.

Joshi went straight to Laik Ali and complained that I had asked him not to associate with the Nizam's Government. Laik Ali spoke to me of this. I told him about the incident and both of us enjoyed it heartily.

The next day the *asthis* were installed in a public park in Hyderabad where the *Gita* recital and the *Bhajans* continued day and night and large crowds of Hindus and Muslims came to pay them respects.

According to an appointment previously made, Laik Ali met me the same day to continue our discussions on the problems before us. He immediately agreed to my suggestion that we should shelve the discussion on the Standstill Agreement and work out a formula for a permanent settlement. He was also of the view that the relations between the Union and Hyderabad would only improve if that were done.

In spite of all his sweetness and lavish hospitality nothing could move Laik Ali from his original position. He was willing to yield Defence to the Union, but would not cede to it any control over the Hyderabad Army nor submit to any restriction on its strength. Nor would he agree to bind himself to carry out the Union's instructions with regard to Defence, even if public tranquillity in the country was threatened. He might do so, he said, but the decision at all times must rest with the Nizam.

He insisted though Hyderabad would concede External Affairs to the Union, the State must be free to pass its own laws with regard to citizenship, naturalization and aliens. Its citizens must also enjoy only such fundamental rights as might be conceded by the Nizam and not those that were

granted by the Union Constituent Assembly. Hyderabad should also have the freedom to appoint Agents in foreign countries, to trade freely and to make its own exchange regulations. It must also have the right to enter into independent international agreements. Above all, it must have the right to plan and develop its own economy independently of India, with the aid of foreign exchange which it had itself earned.

Hyderabad, again, was willing to concede Communications to the Union, but it must have complete and exclusive control over such all-India communications as passed through the State though they connected the north of India with the South.

It was the old, old story of September-October, 1947. The Nizam's Government was willing to accede to the three Central Subjects, *provided* all effective control over them was handed over to Hyderabad. This formula had a strong family likeness to all Hyderabad formulas. It would give the cloth as long as it was all holes and no cloth.

I told Laik Ali plainly that if he was determined on the stand he had taken, it would be difficult to convince the Government of India that the Nizam was in earnest about conceding Defence, External Affairs and Communications to the Centre.

Two days later, the *asthis* were taken in a procession to the *Sangam*. At the last moment, though its route was diverted through an unfrequented road, both Hindus and Muslims joined the procession shouting '*Gandhiji ki jai*'.

Laik Ali, his colleagues, high officials, nawabs, jagirdars and a vast concourse, had gathered at the *Sangam*. At the confluence I performed the ceremony in knee-deep waters to the chanting of Vedic mantras. The crowd continued to chant Gandhiji's favourite *dhun*: *Ishwar Allah tere nam: sabko sanmati de Bhagvan*. 'Thy name is Ishwar and Allah. May Thou, Lord, give good sense to us all.'

Laik Ali stood by me all the time and I think he was moved. It was a great day for Hyderabad, with everyone fraternising with everyone else and chanting the same words.

That night Laik Ali and I met at his private house to continue our discussions which now ranged over the problem of the Razakars. I pressed upon him once again the urgent need of controlling them; but he would only do so, he said,

if the Union Government came to a settlement, allowed Hyderabad to have a strength of 25,000 troops and 35,000 police and immediately supplied the full military equipment needed for them, whatever the rights of the Union be under the Standstill Agreement!

It was midnight when we parted. 'Do you rely upon the Razakars as your trump card to get the Government of India to accept whatever you demand?', I remember asking him bluntly.

'You are always worrying yourself about Hyderabad,' he chafingly observed. 'Why don't you relax? Why don't you sometimes come to the Club?'

'I am not a club-going man,' I replied.

'Are you not fond of bridge?', he asked.

'I set my face against learning to play bridge years ago. I have no time for it,' was my reply.

Laik Ali's eyes had a humorous twinkle. 'Don't you like the company of women?' he enquired.

'Women! Oh yes,' I said. 'But one is as much as I can manage in one life.'

In spite of his great self-control, he could not help showing his annoyance. He said laughing, 'I should like to throw you out of this window.'

I too laughed. 'If you want to do that, do it now,' I said. 'This is the only time when the hundred thousand people who followed Gandhiji's ashes to-day are likely to follow my funeral.'

We shook hands and parted.

On February 20, I met Sir Walter Monckton for the first time. We had a very friendly talk during which we were like two lawyers exchanging impersonal views on the respective cases of their clients. It need not be said that I was very greatly impressed by his clarity of perception and adroitness of presentation.

The next day Laik Ali invited me to dinner together with Monckton and Moin Nawaz. We discussed the same thing over again. Laik Ali would not move an inch from his position. No accession, only alliance. No banning of the Razakars' activities unless the Union came to a satisfactory arrange-

ment with Hyderabad. No constitutional changes except on the basis of a 50 : 50 Muslim-non-Muslim ratio.

The instructions of Sardar, on the other hand, were unequivocal. Responsible Government should be introduced first and the Ittehad, which was a menace to the whole of South, must be liquidated forthwith. Satisfactory discussions about a permanent settlement could only follow these preliminary actions.

We were as far apart from each other as in August, 1947.

Razvi's reactions to the emotions of the people during the immersion celebrations had been characteristic. For three days Hindus and Muslims had joined in paying homage to Gandhiji's *asthis* and Hyderabad had rung with the cries of '*Gandhiji ki jai*' and the chantings that Ishwar and Allah were the One. This was too much for him and he started one of his most vicious attacks on India:

Free India was being enslaved. When inside the Assembly Hall, freedom was being celebrated, lifeless bodies of helpless Muslims lay outside the street!... The Central Government is incompetent to govern the country. In this atmosphere I am asked to establish relations between Hyderabad and the Union. The question that confronts me is—'With whom shall I establish my relations? With Mr. Nehru, Sardar Patel, Capitalism, Socialism, the Mahasabha, the Rajputs, the Sikhs or the Andhras?' Hyderabad is a solidarity. You (referring to Indian Union) are in the mists. Find out a place for yourself first and then turn your attentions to Hyderabad.

As was usual with him, he never forgot me:

The State Congress has been transferred to Deccan House. The Agent-General in Hyderabad does not represent the Union, but is presiding over the State Congress. What is this representative of India doing here? Wherever this gentleman sets his foot, there is destruction. Hyderabad cannot put up with him for a moment.

Once he wound up by saying:

You must ask your Government to tear this Instrument into pieces at once and throw it into the wastepaper basket. The Government are trying to do so and I offer them a further opportunity. But as far as the Indian Union is concerned, I cannot grant more than one month's time. This declaration of mine can be taken as a declaration of war.

Meanwhile the Nizam's Government was taking rapid action on the basis of being made independent. A ban

was placed on the export of groundnuts, the staple produce of Hyderabad, from the State disturbing the markets all over India. The Indian rupee was also banned in defiance of the Standstill Agreement; in consequence the prices of commodities crashed in Hyderabad. The State then began to purchase large stocks at low prices, in order to build up reserves either to meet any crisis, or to earn foreign exchange on its own through export.

Attempts were made to establish trade connections with Persia, Egypt, the United Kingdom, the United States of America and Canada. A large amount of sterling was also placed at the disposal of the Agent of Hyderabad in the U. K. to meet any emergency or to carry on a direct foreign trade.

Communications had been vested in the Union Government by the Standstill Agreement. In disregard of this, plans were made to buy out Tata & Sons Ltd., who held certain shares in Deccan Airways, the rest of the shares being held by the Nizam's Government. The object was to acquire more aeroplanes for Deccan Airways so that Hyderabad could be linked by air with Karachi in West Pakistan and Chittagong in East Pakistan. On the other hand, when the Union Ministry of Communications gave a licence at my instance to an Indian Airways Company to operate in Hyderabad, Moin Nawaz claimed that the territorial integrity of the State had been infringed.

On February 21, the whole position was reviewed at a conference in New Delhi presided over by Sardar.¹ This was attended by the Chief Ministers of Bombay, Madras and the Central Provinces and the Home Ministers of Bombay and Madras, besides the secretaries of all ministries concerned and myself. It was decided to take prompt steps to stop the Razakars from trespassing upon the Union territory, to prevent the smuggling of arms, ammunition and other goods needed for warlike preparations, and to arrest, in so far as it was possible, any activity of the Nizam's Government to further preparation for a military conflict.

It was also decided that the atrocities committed by the Razakars should be fully reported in radio broadcasts.

¹ For Sardar's remarks vide V. P. Menon: *Integration of the Indian States*, p. 341.

CHAPTER XVI

MY LIFE AT BOLARUM

MEANWHILE, my personal life, to say the least, was one of perpetual strain.

My Secretary and Deputy Secretary had gone to live in the adjoining house, the Abbey, and only came to *Dakshina Sadan* for office-work. Raghupati, my Private Secretary, my Personal Assistant and Major Randhir Singh, the A.D.C., lived with me. We were hardly what might be called company, particularly as some outsider was always present at lunch, tea and dinner and our talk invariably remained anchored to the affairs of Hyderabad all day long.

After February, I was seldom invited to other people's homes. Even if an invitation came, I declined it, for I knew that it had been given at great risk to the host; he was exposing himself to the wrath of both the Nizam and the Ittehad and would be subjected at least to espionage. Except for my visits to Laik Ali on business, the only people whom I visited, therefore, were Raja Bahadur Aravamudu Iyengar and Srimati Sarojinidevi's husband and children, who, were very kind to me.

Up to July, my wife continued to come to Bolarum for some days every month, but the visits made her unhappy. The life in *Dakshina Sadan* was cheerless. Most of the day I was busy with interviews, reports and correspondence. She had nowhere to go and the police and Razakar camps stationed near the house had a depressing effect on her. Moreover, the situation in which I was placed made her anxious and the reports of the atrocities committed by the Razakars which poured in almost daily roused her anger.

The Agent-General's car carrying the Union Flag could scarcely pass a lorry full of Razakars without their shouting defiance, or singing some such vigorous rhymes as:—

Nizam ke kadmon pe Nehru ko jhuka denge;

Patel Munshi ko kabron me gad denge.

(We shall force Nehru to bow low at the feet of the Nizam;
We shall bury Patel and Munshi in their graves.)

When we came across little boys selling newspapers at

street corners, the National Flag on my car would make them shout: '*Tazi Khabren: Sardar Patel mar gaye: ek anna.*' ('Latest news: Sardar Patel dead—one anna'. I could enjoy these antics; my wife could not.

Sometimes reports of private meetings where my fate had been discussed, upset my wife. Once when she happened to be in Bolarum, an alarm was sounded after midnight. Someone had been trying to scale the compound wall.

All these incidents, trivial in themselves, drove her into making a little plan for her own protection; I only learnt of it on my return to Bombay after the Police Action. The reports of the kidnapping and molestation of women by the Razakars which came so frequently from the villages had set her thinking and at last she managed to secure a bottle of cyanide. After that, whenever she came to Hyderabad, she carried a little snuff-box of the deadly poison in her hand-bag. 'Better death than dishonour', was what she thought.

When I learnt about this in October, I had the bottle thrown away. Thank God that nobody had made a mistake, for the quantity was enough to poison a whole regiment.

My sons and daughters, if I remember right, came only once. They could not understand why I continued to live under the conditions which existed in Hyderabad.

My daily routine was exacting enough. I discussed Hyderabad affairs with visitors and foreign correspondents, received reports from various quarters, read and dictated letters and wrote my regular bi-weekly reports to Sardar.

The telephone alone served to bring the outside world to me. My daily communications on the telephone with Sardar, except when he was too ill to talk, were an excellent tonic. For years we had talked to each other over the telephone about the most important things in the world in a language of our own. We spoke in Gujarati, interlarding it with obscure village idioms. Each person referred to had a code name and each subject a code story, which unfolded itself from day to day.

On most days, I had telephone talks with V. P. Menon. Sometimes, I had talks with O. P. Ramaswami Reddiar, the Chief Minister of Madras, Morarji Desai then the Home Minister of Bombay, and with D. P. Misra, the Home Minister of the Central Provinces (now Madhya Pradesh). Infrequently, I talked

with Dr. Bidhan Chandra Roy, the Chief Minister of Bengal. I also talked to several individuals outside Hyderabad, for wagons and trucks, bringing arms and ammunition, had to be tracked down to prevent their being smuggled into the State, and spies had to be followed.

In the mid-Victorian days of the mail coach, people talked of the sanctity of personal correspondence. But in those days criminals and members of subversive groups did not try to hold nations and societies to ransom as they do at present. Science also had not made communications ubiquitous and easy. But now, nothing is easier for the enemies of the State than to carry on wide-spread conspiracies through the communication agencies provided by it.

Telephonic communication between Hyderabad and the world passed through the control room in Trimulgherry near Bolarum. It was within my jurisdiction and the reports of intercepted conversation about Hyderabad affairs were most amusing. There were strange conversations; sometimes clearly political, sometimes merely intriguing. For instance, there were times when an English lady in Hyderabad talked to another in New Delhi in French songs—which I am sure were not exercises in recitation.

Some of the censored letters were also highly entertaining. For instance, a lady from England wrote to a Begum in Hyderabad a curious letter. It appeared that when the writer had left Hyderabad she had taken a few of the pendants from an old chandelier in the Residency. Would the Begum be kind enough to get in touch with an old servant, who was named and who was now on the Agent-General's establishment, and secure a few more, as her set was incomplete without them? Then there was the gentleman who, in his letters to three ladies in different parts of the world, discussed love and politics with equal enthusiasm.

I have the habit of pursuing the study of some subject unconnected with the work in hand. At this time I was interested in the fall of ancient Gujarat, brought about in A.D. 1299 by the armies of Sultan Ala-ud-din Khalji of Delhi. The four wicked Gujaratis who were then captured and taken to Delhi seemed to me fascinating. They were Kamala Devi, the queen of the last king of Gujarat, and her beautiful daughter,

Deval Devi, though from a historical point of view, I concluded, that these two were only the figment of the poet Amir Khusru's imagination. The other two were Malik Kafur and Khusrau' the Sultan who succeeded Mubarak Khalji who was himself killed by the Tughlaks. These were Hindu slaves captured from Gujarat and transplanted to Delhi, where they prospered and met with an ignominious end leaving a record of brutality and shame.

I also began to write a novel of the period, with Deval Devi as the heroine, but the atmosphere in which I was living was not conducive to the free play of imagination and I was obliged to rewrite the first part of it at Lucknow in 1953.

It was impossible to keep the few armoured cars and tanks, the last remnant of the Indian Army in the Secunderabad Cantonment any longer. The corps was deployed in such a way that these vehicles had to be sent to Jhansi for being reorganized.

I held a ceremonial parade to bid good-bye to the departing remnant of the army which had always occupied the Secunderabad Barracks since the days of Lord Wellesley and had been the pivot round which the peace and unity of India had revolved for a hundred and fifty years. I was not happy at parting with it, and I prayed that the day might soon come when the Indian Army might be re-installed once again in the Cantonment.

Laik Ali, some of the Ministers and several public men, were invited on this occasion. As car after car and tank after tank passed by, dipping its gun, I took the salute. I need not say that those present, who were connected with the Ittehad, were very unhappy.

Later, some of the Ittehad leaders made a grievance of this ceremony on the ground that it had humiliated the Nizam. 'Munshi performed the ceremony to impress upon the people the might of India', they said. They did not realise that the wretched people of the State, who were every day subjected to the threat of sword, gunshot, murder and arson, were entitled to have at least one day when they could see for themselves how well protected they were.

My world was circumscribed by the compound wall of the *Dakshina Sadan*. In the evening, however, friends dropped in

and we had walks in the gardens. On most evenings Ramachari, Ramakrishna Rao or Ganeriwal would keep me company.

During all these months I had to face various difficulties and frustrations and sometimes even humiliation which hurt me deeply. I could only keep going by *dhyān* (concentration of the mind) and prayers. I recited everyday—sometimes twice or thrice—the Twelfth Canto of the *Bhagavad Gita*. I needed all the strength that Sri Krishna could give me. I do not know how many times a day I repeated the lines:

The devotee expects nothing;
He is pure of heart; in detachment, enveloped;
He is bent on the task before him;
Rising above distress, he never seeks for himself;
Such a devotee of Mine is dear to Me.

I confess that I was sometimes inclined to take a short-cut out of the life I was leading by asking Sardar to relieve me of this particular office. I was out of pocket; the duties were onerous; my future was at stake. Before my appointment as Agent-General, I had been unpopular with some highly-placed circles in New Delhi and I knew that now I was sure to be more unpopular with them. To this knowledge was added the distinct possibility that there were Razakars who might make an attempt to secure a place in heaven by doing away with me.

In spite of these things, God gave me the strength to stick to my job.

The Brahmans, with Sanskrit as their instrument, had given cultural unity to India as the land of *dharma*. They had dreamt of political unity and of the ancient *chakravartīs* who had held it together. But neither Chandragupta Maurya nor Asoka, neither Samudragupta nor Akbar, had succeeded in doing so.

I, too, had dreamt of Indian Unity and in an insignificant way had worked for it. Now there had arisen a mighty man who was consolidating the land as never before. God had given me the rare privilege of being in his confidence, and of being able to serve him.

In coming here I had accepted God's mandate, and I had to obey it. If I succeeded, Hyderabad would cease to disrupt India; if, in seeking the unity of India, I lost my life, it was worth losing for I should have left a tradition behind.

CHAPTER XVII

PERSONA NON GRATA

THOUGH the elaborate discussions which Laik Ali, Mo'in Nawaz and myself were having, struck no common ground, they disclosed two firm positions from which it was impossible to dislodge Laik Ali. Both were fraught with grave and immediate danger.

First of all, Laik Ali denied unequivocally that the State Forces Scheme was binding on the Nizam's Government. The Union Government, therefore, had no power to control or supervise the Nizam's troops, and Hyderabad was independent of the Union in matters of Defence.

This was a clear repudiation of the Standstill Agreement, which vested all matters relating to Defence in the Government of India. On a closer examination of the agreements and arrangements which went by the name of the Indian State Forces Scheme, I also discovered that many of their terms had already been violated in the most flagrant way. In fact, if Laik Ali stuck to his contentions, the Union would have no choice but to stand by and watch Hyderabad developing into a hostile military camp.

Secondly, Laik Ali declined either to liquidate the Razakars or to control their activities, unless he was provided with full equipment for the army and the armed police of the State in such unfettered strength as he thought proper. The Government of India was therefore offered the choice of either accepting the irregular Razakars and all that their existence involved, including the growth of the Communist resistance, or, of making the Ittehad an arm of regulars, 90% of which would be Muslims, which at its behest, could be used against the Hindus in the State and the border districts outside, as also to force the Union Government into military action.

The position in short was that the Union Government must either make Hyderabad militarily strong without any obligation on its part to accede, or allow the position to deteriorate till public tranquillity in the South was seriously disrupted.

I discussed these matters with Sardar and V. P. Menon,

and on February 28, I wrote a letter to Laik Ali summarising the case.

In this connection I must point out that the most serious menace to the internal tranquillity of the State and of all the bordering areas is the Ittehad Organisation which thrives mainly on the patronage and support of your Government. Its avowed object is to secure the sovereignty of Hyderabad, which, according to its declared doctrines, vests in the Muslim subjects of the Nizam. Its volunteer force is 150,000 strong and its leader, Mr. Kasim Razvi, has recently appealed for the stepping up of recruitment by 350,000 more volunteers. This organisation provides a fertile source of recruitment to the State Army and Police Forces. Its volunteers, Razakars, operate throughout the State in close collaboration with the State Army and Police Forces. They spread a reign of terror amongst the non-Muslim population of the State and it is common knowledge that, although they have been inflicting widespread injury on persons and property, they are generally immune from the processes and penalties of the law. Assisted by the State Police and Military, they frequently conduct raids on the neighbouring provinces of the Dominion.

After a close study of the facts and making every allowance for panicky reports, I have been driven to the conclusion—and I have no doubt any impartial tribunal will equally come to the same conclusion—that the Razakars are a private Army operating in the State with the active aid and co-operation of the present Government; that they are a principal contributory factor to the general insecurity prevailing not only in Hyderabad but also in the neighbouring Provinces; and that they therefore constitute a threat to the security of India, which is a matter of common concern to the Government of India and the Nizam's Government.

My conclusion is more than justified by the professed aim of the Razakar activities as openly announced by Kasim Razvi, the President of the Ittehad-ul-Musalmeen, in no uncertain terms.

The President of the Ittehad-ul-Musalmeen has appealed for five lakhs of Razakars. He has stated that women are also being prepared for a fight on the borders of Hyderabad, which necessarily implies a war with India. He has openly declared again and again that Hyderabad is an Islamic State and that sovereignty therein vests in the Muslims of Hyderabad. He has called upon the Razakars to liberate the Muslims of India from the Government of India and has charged my Government with supplying arms to those who carry on violent political activities in Hyderabad. These pronouncements, coming as they do from the President of the Party to which a majority of the Ministers in your present Government owe allegiance,

are calculated to inflame the Muslims of the State and in the whole of India against the non-Muslims and the Dominion of India.

Although by my letter No. D.6/L.A./7, dated the 11th February, 1948, I protested that the attacks on the Government of India should be stopped, I have been vouchsafed no reply. The activities of the Razakars are proving so serious a menace to the tranquillity of South India as would, in my opinion, attract the Defence Power of the Dominion Government. I am sure, however, that you will agree with me that every possible endeavour should be made to obviate the need of invoking it.

I should, therefore, like to have your assurance that, in the interest of the security of India, your Government will be willing to co-operate with the Government of India by withholding all aid to the Ittehad-ul-Musalmeen Organisation so as to incapacitate its Razakars from proving a menace to the security and tranquillity of India and, if the Government of India so desire, banning the organisation altogether, as has been done in the case of the Rashtriya Swayam Sevak Sangh organisation in the Provinces and States of India.

I also offered my willingness to go with him through the State and the bordering districts and co-operate with him in restoring law and order.

At the beginning of March, the Hyderabad Delegation, consisting of Laik Ali, Sir Walter Monckton and Moin Nawaz paid its usual visit to New Delhi. At a meeting held on March 2, with Lord Mountbatten, the discussions were conducted on the same old lines. What had taken place between Laik Ali and India's Agent-General at Hyderabad, most of which was recorded in agreed minutes duly initialled and submitted to the States Ministry, did not come into the picture at all.

In the course of the discussions, Laik Ali's stand remained unchanged. There was no possibility of Hyderabad's acceding to India, nor of responsible Government being introduced in the State; a Hindu majority government was out of the question. The reports about the atrocities committed by the Razakars were all untrue. That volunteer corps had come into existence spontaneously because the Muslims of Hyderabad had felt their lives in danger. A suggestion by Lord Mountbatten that the Razakar organisation should be banned evoked no reply.

Laik Ali, supported by Sir Walter Monckton, created a great impression on the Governor-General's immediate circle.

There was nothing wrong with Hyderabad; it was possible that it was only India's Agent-General who was creating difficulties in the way of smooth negotiations. Laik Ali was injured innocence itself. He declared that he would have loved to talk directly to the Ministers of Madras, Bombay and the C.P. Governments, but much to his disappointment, he had been told that all business should be done through the Agent-General. What was he, helpless as he was, to do?

Anyhow, I was nice enough when it suited Laik Ali. In the course of our endless discussions, he had continually reiterated his desire to introduce representative Government on a fifty-fifty basis. On one occasion, in a moment of irritation, I remember to have said: 'What is the use of repeating this every time? If you are in earnest about it, why not start doing it?' This was reported to New Delhi as my acceptance of the fifty-fifty ratio!

The visit of the Hyderabad Delegation to New Delhi ended as pleasantly as ever. New Delhi was happy that Hyderabad had been good enough not to break off negotiations. Hyderabad was happy that time had been gained. Laik Ali gave a promise that the 20 crore securities given to Pakistan would not be cashed during the term of the Standstill Agreement.

However, the press statement which was about to be issued as a result of the Delegation's meeting with Mountbatten, could not be published. On March 5, Sardar had a heart attack and was confined to bed. The strain had been too much even for his sturdy constitution.

During the time that these discussions were going on, I also happened to be in New Delhi. Sardar fully realised that Laik Ali did not mean business and he told me that as the month of March would soon come to an end, a strong line would have to be taken. He asked Menon and myself to prepare a note pointing out the breach of the appropriate clauses of the Standstill Agreement, and demanding a ban on Razakars. If Laik Ali did not comply with the demand, the frontiers would have to be sealed off to prevent trouble spreading to the surrounding Union districts.

Sardar also asked V. P. Menon to take Major-General Himmatsinhji, Military Adviser to the States Ministry, and myself and place the matter frankly before Lord Mountbatten.

Major-General Himmatsinhji and I accompanied by V. P. Menon met Lord Mountbatten on March 6.

In the course of the interview which took place on March 6, I referred to the deterioration in the law and order situation in Hyderabad and the surrounding areas. I told Lord Mountbatten of the plight of the villagers and of the murders, loot and arson committed by the Razakars. Major-General Himmatsinhji, who had paid a visit to Hyderabad and seen things for himself, gave his impressions of the military preparations that were taking place in the State. I wound up by saying that after two months of strenuous efforts at negotiating a settlement, I had been convinced that the Nizam's Government did not mean business but were only killing time till the Standstill Agreement ran out.

I spoke quite frankly to Lord Mountbatten. Indeed the time had come when it would have been a breach of duty on my part if I failed to apprise him of the real situation. But when I left him, I felt sure that I had become *persona non grata*. I now have the testimony of Campbell-Johnson that my assumption was correct.

In view of Sardar's sudden illness, V. P. Menon and I decided that we should wait a little longer before making the final demand on the Nizam's Government to repair the breaches of the Standstill Agreement. Meanwhile, I was to make a final effort to press upon Laik Ali the immediate necessity of bringing the Razakars under control. We were then under the impression that Sardar's health would improve in two or three weeks.

When I returned to Bolarum, I found the attitude of Laik Ali changed. He was now sure of himself as never before. The Round Table Conference of local leaders, which Laik Ali had publicly promised to call, never came into being. Razvi would not join it. The State Congress would also not join unless Ramanand Tirtha was released from gaol and Laik Ali would not release him. It was an empty gesture, never intended to be followed up by words.

This self-confident attitude struck me as rather strange. It may have been the result of many factors like the conversation with Lord Mountbatten in which the issues which I had raised were not so much as referred to; the certainty of protracting the slow motion negotiations with Lord Mountbatten; and the hope that the collapse of Sardar's health might prove providential.

I began a fresh round of discussions with Laik Ali and Moin Nawaz, during which I made a last effort to persuade them to take decisive action against the Razakars. I urged upon them that if the panic created by the Razakars was allayed, the border areas would settle down, law and order would be restored and the strict watch kept by the Union police on the border areas would be relaxed. There was then a chance of the negotiations succeeding.

When this issue was insistently pressed, Laik Ali came out with a frank reply. He admitted that the Razakars had enormously increased in number on account of the prevailing political atmosphere. But, he said, in view of the situation he would not discourage Razakars from pursuing their activities. He would only deal with them if the State army and the police were raised to the strength that he wanted and full equipment were supplied for them by the Union Government. In such an event, ten thousand or more Razakars would be enlisted in the regular army and the police and the Razakars would no longer remain a separate force.

Meanwhile Laik Ali seemed to have gained the impression that Sardar's health had shaken me in my stand, and that I was prepared to help him to raise the Nizam's army and police to the strength he wanted and to supply them with all the equipment he required.

Our discussions were, in a sense, unreal. Neither Laik Ali nor myself, referred in the course of them to the change that had come over the situation in Hyderabad in the last fortnight of February.

This was our last friendly discussion. We drew up the minutes of our negotiations and initialled them. The next day or the day after I left for New Delhi. The terms which Laik Ali had accepted as final marked no advance on his former position, and in my note to Sardar I had no hesitation in suggesting their definite rejection.

However, in view of the impression which had been left on his mind, Laik Ali remained in the hope that a favourable reply to his suggestions was sure to be forthcoming. Every evening he inquired from me on the telephone when I would be returning to Hyderabad and what had been the result of my talks. It was somewhat difficult to give a straightforward reply.

CHAPTER XVIII

BETWEEN THE DEVIL—

A CLEAR picture of the rapidly deteriorating situation in Hyderabad in the months of February and March can only emerge if the implications of the change are kept in mind.

Towards the end of February, the South-East Asian Youth Conference was held in Calcutta. This had been sponsored by the World Federation of Democratic Youth and the International Union of Students, both Communist organisations. Behind this innocent facade, a revolutionary decision was taken by important Communist leaders from various parts of the world.

It was at this Conference that the leaders of the Communist Parties of China, Burma, Malaya and Indonesia framed a common programme. As a result a definite break was decided upon in the policy of the Communist Party of India. The thesis adopted condemned the Indian Socialists for betraying the democratic revolution, characterised the Nehru Government as a stooge of the United Kingdom and the United States of America and suggested the withdrawal of Communist support from it or rather, whatever went by that name. The draft Constitution of India was also condemned as reactionary and undemocratic.

This decision brought about a re-orientation in the activities of the Communist Party in Hyderabad. According to a secret circular, Andhra, where the Communists had acquired a substantial hold, was to be the first area to be Sovietised, wherefrom the whole of India could be 'liberated'.

In order to achieve this object, a new policy was adopted. The Razakars were to be baited on a more vigorous scale and an active programme to set up Soviets in the villages under the control was to be pushed through. Through insurrection and guerilla warfare, complete control was to be acquired over the Telugu-speaking areas of the Krishna, Guntur, West Godavari and East Godavari districts in Madras, and Nalgonda and Warangal districts of Hyderabad.

Though the effect began to be felt in Hyderabad in the middle of February, Communist propaganda had for some time been trained against the State Congress and the Nehru Government; according to it the Standstill Agreement was a Nizam-Patel conspiracy and the State Congress undemocratic and reactionary. Curiously enough, the Communists and the Razakars were agreed on one point: the Nehru Government was the enemy.

By the end of February the Communists had dropped the make-believe of a United Front with the State Congress. The State Congress workers and their sympathisers, who were allies but a few weeks before, now became avowed enemies; they were often assaulted and driven out of the districts which were under Communist control. The Communist influence was also extended up to the City of Hyderabad and active centres were set up in the southern district of Atrafabalda.

By the middle of March I gathered the details of the mounting atrocities which were being committed by the Communists as well as by the Razakars. The position had taken an extremely ugly turn. The Communists flung themselves upon the Telugu-speaking districts and occupied village after village in the guise of resisting the Razakars.

The *Communist Crimes in Hyderabad*, a report issued by the Hyderabad Government relating to this period, summarises the position as follows:—

From the 15th August, 1946 to 13th September, 1948, they brutally murdered nearly 2000 persons, attacked 22 police outposts, seized and destroyed village records, manhandled a large number of village officials, burnt 'chadris' and Customs outposts, captured 230 guns, looted or destroyed paddy and robbed cash and jewellery worth more than a million rupees. They attempted large-scale disruption of communications and lines of supply and transport and steadily and systematically adopted the technique of guerilla fighting with the arms and resources at their disposal.

The nature of the atrocities committed by the Communists can be illustrated by a few typical instances:

More than 500 armed Communists raided the village Peddavid, Huzurnagar Taluq, Nalgonda district, murdered ten villagers, including women and children and severely injured ten others. Seventy houses had been set fire to, all of them were gutted and children were thrown into the fire. This incident was a reprisal as one of the villagers of Peddavid had

given information to the police about the presence in the neighbourhood of Kot Narain, a notorious Communist outlaw... Sixteen people, including a woman, were kidnapped by Communists at a place near Pengot and taken to Lingagiri. The men were murdered and their bodies set on fire. The burnt bodies were later found lying near the Lingagiri border, but there was no trace of the woman. A party of twenty-five Communists entered the village Dharnipahad at night, caught hold of an aged Muslim woman, took her to the jungle and speared her to death.

A considerable number of these atrocities took place during the campaign which had been started at the beginning of March, though its active phase had begun by the end of February.

As late as July, 1951, when I visited the Warangal district, the Communists were still spreading terror and devastation in the villages in the forest areas.

The activities of the Razakars rose in proportion to those of the Communists. They were now being openly supported by the armed forces of the State and the police. But neither belligerent, though each one claimed to be fighting the other, ever dared to go into the other's territory; both were conducting their warfare by committing atrocities in the unfortunate villages within one's own territory.

From October, 1947, when the Standstill Agreement was made on the 3rd of April, 1948, there were no less than 260 incidents in which the Razakars acted with savage brutality. Of these the worst were perpetrated during the intensive stage which began about the end of February.

The technique of the Razakars was common in all the three districts of Nalgonda, Warangal and Bidar. For instance, on March 10, the Communists raided the two villages Wadlokonda and Somavaram in the Warangal district, beat a number of the men and ill-treated some of the women. Among them were a couple of Muslims.

Next day the Muslim Sub-Inspector of Police arrived in Wadlokonda and removed the arms which some of the residents possessed under the licences issued by the Government.

On the 12th and 13th, the Razakars, led by the president of the local Ittehad and supported by the Sub-Inspector, attacked the village. Three hundred houses were burnt; so were a large number of grain-stores. Of the twenty-two persons killed, eighteen were lined up in the Bazar and shot dead. Sixteen carts with their bullocks were cast into the fire.

The Razakars then spread into the adjoining villages, burning, looting, killing and belabouring the inhabitants. Their technique was uniform. Headed by the Police, they entered a village and took all the men into custody. The able-bodied men were then taken to the bazar, where they were made to stand in line and shot dead. The ornaments of the women, including the *mangalasutra*, a sacred ornament with which no married woman would part, were then snatched away. After that the rest of Razakars went into the village, sprinkled petrol on the houses and set fire to them. Sometimes people were burnt in their own houses or thrown into the fire.

Within a very few days, nine villages were thus reduced to ashes, thousands of men were killed, numerous women were molested and numerous houses and grainstores burnt down by the hundred.

But the activities reached their climax in the district of Bidar.

On January 29, the Minister Venkatarao, leader of the Ittehad Harijans, made a vicious attack in an open conference on the Brahmans, Banias and Lingayats, who formed a large class of the petty traders in the Bidar district. He declared that the Lingayats were the arch criminals who were responsible for the miseries of the depressed classes and he therefore exhorted his people to exterminate them.

Between the middle of February and the end of May, the Ittehad Harijans of Bidar, led rather than actively supported by the Razakars and helped by the police, responded to their leader's call. They devastated 129 villages in the district, burnt over a thousand houses; looted lakhs' worth of property; killed several hundreds of villagers of both sex and committed rape on dozens of unfortunate women.

On the 21st of February, the Razakars burnt down 55 houses, kidnapped two women and looted or destroyed property valued at four lakhs of rupees. Between the 24th and 27th of February, loot, arson, murder and rape were perpetrated in 12 villages in the Chitapoka Taluka.

Before the 3rd of March, 1950, about 50 villages were similarly dealt with in the Bidar Taluka and the police had taken no action whatever.

These incidents were reported to me by a number of lead-

ing public men. The correspondents of our leading newspapers went to the affected villages and verified the conditions. I also made enquiries through my own men.

Later, the Lawyers' Vigilance Committee, including a Member of the Legislative Council, visited several of these unfortunate villages and made their report. A lurid picture was given by the Vigilance Committee of the village of Gorta, which was destroyed on May 10 as a part of the campaign which began in February. The horrors can best be described in their own words.

After Chincholi, we reached Gorta on the 17th of May, 1948, at 11 a.m. Gorta presented an awful and heart-rending sight. Nobody was there except one wounded person and three aged women. The whole village and its surroundings, even from afar, were stinking awfully. Hundreds of cattle were breathing their last for want of water and fodder. All round the village the dead bodies of animals were seen lying in a decomposed state. Heaps of human skeletons and bones and half-burnt dead bodies were seen lying even at the time of our visit in different places in the whole village. Even in the very village the bad odour is unbearable.

The village is completely desolate. The houses and the localities have been entirely ruined. Mr. Abdul Hamid Khan, Sub-Inspector, Karimabad, along with six constables, is staying in the Luxmi Temple.

There (had been) many wealthy Hindu inhabitants in the village before this incident. There were 400 houses in the village with a population of 2,500, but now except the Government godown and the houses belonging to the community of the Depressed Classes and the Muslims, the rest have been gutted. The loss is estimated at Rs. 70 lakhs.

Till our visit to the village, no Panchnama had been prepared by the police either of (the) human bones or (the) dead bodies or the gutted houses, (or) that of the loss. The said Sub-Inspector stated that no Panch was available for preparing the Panchnama, and that he was unable to identify the bones and the dead bodies burnt.

Meanwhile a resident of the village who had taken shelter in the adjoining village, came there in search of his cattle. (He) appeared to be utterly frightened. In the absence of the Sub-Inspector we consoled him and on enquiry he started weeping, and said: 'More than 200 persons have been mercilessly murdered and the dead bodies have been burnt in cow-dung cakes and heads of fodder.' He even pointed out where the dead bodies (had been) heaped together and burnt.

We stepped into the house, along with the Sub-Inspector, where the dead bodies had been gathered together and burnt.

Human skulls and bones were found everywhere. Their panchnama was prepared in our presence. After (that) we and the Sub-Inspector proceeded to the field of Mr. Narayan Rao Mek-tedar, where heaps of *kadbi* were lying. Many dead bodies (had been) gathered and burnt in the heaps. Here also human bones and the remains of the dead bodies were found, half burnt. Moreover, there were two heaps of *kadbi* in the field of one Channappa in which dead bodies (had been) burnt. Human skulls and bones were found there.

It is evident from the inspection of these places that over 200 persons (had been) murdered. After the preparation of (the) panchnama the Sub-Inspector collected the bones and sent them for medical examination. One witness said that the raiders were Muslims and Dheds. They belonged to different villages. Most of them belonged to the villages Godgaon, Boral, Kankat, Borwadi, Kamla, Chinchli and Panchnal.

Another witness said that the raiders numbered 500 and (he) knew many of them. One constable named Qudrat Ullah bearing badge No. 38 (had been) present on the occasion. He stated that the attack had taken place on 10th May and 300 goondas took part in the raid, and the (villagers) resisted for two days, but due to constant and serious attack, they had to run for their lives. The house of Madhappa, which was more or less a fort, was gutted completely. All the other houses were also fully burnt. But we are surprised that the Government godowns and the houses belonging to Muslims and the depressed classes were left untouched.

Meanwhile two shepherds, who had taken shelter in the adjoining village, happened to come over there. Both of them corroborated the statement of the witness. We have taken many snapshots of the gutted houses and the bones. Most of the wounded and the murdered belonged to the Lingayat community.

CHAPTER XIX

—AND THE DEEP SEA

THE subversive activities of the Communists had helped the Razakars to spread terror in the non-Communist areas. The Nizam's Government could control neither the one nor the other without the assistance of the Government of India which they would not take. The Government of India was their enemy No. 1.

When on the 19th and 20th of March, I was at New Delhi, V. P. Menon and I reviewed the situation very carefully. By then, though the Government of India had embarked upon a sweeping movement over the subversive activities of the Communists in the different Provinces, they were helpless so far as Hyderabad was concerned. The border areas in the Union Provinces were aflame with panic and the utmost the Union police could do was to resist the Razakars' incursions into their territory. It was also difficult for the Madras Government to suppress the Communists' activities in the Telugu-speaking districts of their own Province, for the people, including the Congressmen, sympathised and not necessarily passively, with the Communist resistance in Hyderabad.

All these factors were very disturbing. Unless the Razakars were liquidated the Communists would continue to grow in strength and acquire a greater strangle-hold over the Telugu-speaking districts and areas. At the same time, the Nizam's Government would continue to grow weak and in the end, the Communists would obtain a complete hold over Andhra. In the meantime, the Mountbatten negotiations immobilising the Government of India, would proceed month after month from futility to futility. The Nizam's Government would continue to strengthen their armed forces, to manufacture arms and ammunition, to enlist the sympathies of foreign countries, to woo the Conservative Party in England, and when the time came, invoke the aid of the Security Council of the U.N.O.

Meanwhile South India was lapsing into insecurity and the only man who could take decisive action lay seriously ill.

The time had therefore come, Menon and I thought, to implement the decision of giving some kind of ultimatum to the Nizam's Government on the Razakar issue.

I prepared the draft of a letter which was recast by V. P. Menon and in which the breaches of the Standstill Agreement committed by the Nizam's Government were set out in full. It also called upon the Government to fulfil its obligations by withdrawing the twenty crore loan notes which had been handed over to the Pakistan Government; by agreeing to a joint commission to examine and determine the agreements and arrangements relating to matters of Defence; by furnishing a return of the strength, organisation and equipment of the Police in the form in use prior to August 15, 1947; by banning the organisation of Razakars; by repealing the Ordinance which made the use of Indian currency for cash transactions illegal in the State; by cancelling the ban on the export of gold, groundnuts and other oil-seeds; and by cancelling the agreement, if any, with the United Press of America regarding the transmitting and/or receiving station for foreign news.

The letter concluded as follows:—

The peculiar position of Ittehad-ul-Mussalmeen in Hyderabad and of the Communists on the border causes the gravest concern to the Government of India. They consider that in the interest of peace inside the State and on both sides of the border, the Ittehad-ul-Mussalmeen should be banned and its organisations wound up. If the activities of the Ittehad are not immediately stopped, it is apprehended that a very grave situation will develop involving the security not only of Hyderabad, but also of the adjoining Provinces of C.P., Bombay and Madras.

I am accordingly to request that H.E.H.'s Government will take prompt and definite steps to fulfil their obligations arising out of the Standstill Agreement and to ban the Ittehad as suggested. The Government of India will appreciate a very early reply indicating the action which H.E.H. the Nizam's Government decides to take, or has taken in respect of the various matters set out in this letter.¹

We finalised the letter, which was approved by Sardar. Under his instructions we also showed it to Panditji, who also approved of the draft.

In Hyderabad, Laik Ali was impatiently awaiting my return. He was expecting that I would bring Sardar's consent

¹ *White Paper on Hyderabad (Supplement), p. 22.*

to his proposals. In fact, the previous day he had made an impatient enquiry of me as to when I was returning to Hyderabad.

On reaching Hyderabad on March 26, I went to Laik Ali's office and handed over the letter of V. P. Menon, adding that the States Ministry had authorised me to deliver it. He discovered an unusual touch of formality behind my words. He hurriedly tore open the envelope and read through the contents of the letter. His face fell. He was manifestly upset.

I bade him good-bye and was going to leave, when he begged me not to go. I could not find it in my heart to leave him with such abruptness, so I complied with his wishes. For a minute or two he did not know what to say.

He then asked me whether Panditji had also approved of the letter. I replied, 'This is a Government letter, and to my knowledge, both Panditji and the Sardar have approved of it.'

'What has led to this sudden change?' he asked.

'If the Nizam is a friend of the Union', I said, 'he should prevent the Razakars from disturbing the peace of the South and mobilising the Muslims of India against the Union'.

We went over the same ground again. Laik Ali ultimately said in excitement: 'The Nizam is willing to be a martyr; two lakhs of Muslims are willing to offer their lives for Hyderabad's independence. I want you to put a bullet into me'.

'Nothing of the kind. You will live to be the Prime Minister for many years to come' was my reply and with that I left.

As usual, on going home, I dictated the minutes of our conversation.

V.P.'s letter of 23rd of March, which I delivered on the 26th, had the momentary effect of bringing reality to the fore.

On March 29, a high-level conference was held between Laik Ali, Razvi and some of the Ittehad leaders, to discuss the lines on which to meet the demand. The conference came to the conclusion that the Government of India was sure to lose on the Kashmir front and would not risk taking any action in Hyderabad; that if they attempted any such thing, the Muslims in the whole of India would rise against the Hindus. Sardar was dying. Once he was dead, Munshi would go and

things would settle down once more to the monthly rounds of infructuous negotiations.

The month of March expired. The period which Sardar had fixed for the bringing about permanent accession had come to an end. So had the period in which I had promised Gandhiji to do my best to negotiate a settlement.

Immediately the letter of March 23 was delivered, Laik Ali, Moin Nawaz and Razvi assumed full control of the situation. The Nizam was completely isolated. Deen Yar Jung, as the watch-dog of the ruling group, was in full-time attendance on him and even Sir Walter Monckton could not see him as freely as before. The practice so far followed of placing all papers before him was changed; now Laik Ali only gave oral reports of what was happening. Hosh, so far in daily attendance, was told by the Nizam not to attend at the King Kothi on the excuse that he was unwell.

On March 29, I met Sir Walter Monckton, who had again come to India on his regular visit. He was exactly his old confident self. We discussed both the letter of the 23rd, which had left him a little baffled, and the deterioration in Indo-Hyderabad relations.

For the first time Sir Walter asked me whether I thought there was any way out of the impasse. Could not the relations between the Union and Hyderabad be placed on the footing that had obtained before August 15, 1947, without expressly mentioning Accession? I replied that this was a matter for the Government of India to decide.

What was troubling me most was the rapid conversion of Hyderabad into a military camp. Recruits were being enlisted in large numbers in the army, the Razakars and the police, new barracks were being built and military stores were being systematically stolen from the Secunderabad cantonment. Moreover, a bren gun factory had been put up.

Accession had been unequivocally rejected. The Standstill Agreement had been worse than a scrap of paper. Its sole use had been to put India in the wrong for not having supplied arms and ammunition.

The Razakars, now about one hundred thousand strong, were in control of the life of the State and continued to indulge

as before in loot, murder and arson. Between April, 1947, and March, 1948, approximately 250 villages in the State had been looted or burnt, 4,000 houses set on fire, 500 persons killed or wounded and 450 women molested. Yet the Hyderabad radio claimed that this was all untrue.

The Nizam's Government had increased the strength of the army and police and several British ex-officers of the Indian Army had been engaged to bring the army up to fighting efficiency. Small arms and ammunition had begun to be manufactured in Hyderabad itself and an ex-British officer was employed in Calcutta to buy and smuggle illicit arms and ammunition. Contacts had been established with several foreign countries and well-paid propaganda agencies had been set going against India in Pakistan, U.K. and U.S.A.

Lawlessness was on the increase. The Communists were terrorising villages in Telangana and murdering, burning, looting and establishing Soviets in some of them. The Razakars, with police assistance, continued to inflict reprisals on the slightest provocation. If the Communists were to continue to be permitted to operate in Telangana, as they were doing, it would soon be their stronghold and if the defenceless villages were suppressed by the Razakars, they would be completely destroyed.

In the meantime, panic was driving the villagers from the State into the Union Provinces and the border areas of the Union continued to be raided by the Razakars. The police of these Provinces had to guard the frontiers to prevent the raids from Hyderabad on the one hand and the smuggling of arms on the other. With negotiations at New Delhi carried on month after month, without making any progress, I had to stand by helpless while the situation deteriorated.

My task became increasingly difficult. As the Razakars preceded me wherever I went, I never went out of *Dakshina Sadan* grounds unless to visit Laik Ali. But many people continued to see me every day and I kept as good watch over the activities of the Nizam, Laik Ali and Razvi, as, with my limited opportunities, I possibly could.

The Congress influence was waning. Quite a few thousand workers were in jail. Bindu, Melkote and M. Ramchandra Rao kept up some small spasmodic activities, but the

effective control in the border areas, had already passed into the hands of the Communists.

The people were demoralised. Frightened, impatient, trembling for their very lives, they continued to hope that the Government of India, and particularly Sardar, would come to their rescue. *Alas, I could do very little to strengthen their confidence.*

Stories were now current that houses were being requisitioned for military officers of the Union in Sholapur, the border town in Bombay. El Edroos, the Commander-in-Chief of the Nizam's Forces, thereupon, called his officers and told them to get ready for a conflict. The air was thick with rumours of military action.

At last the Government of India meant business, was what the people thought.

CHAPTER XX

THE MYSTERY SPEECH OF RAZVI

I WAS the wicked man who must somehow be removed from Hyderabad.

A very ingenious trap was therefore laid for me. On March 8 my office received a redirected letter, originally addressed to me 'under the care of Shri V. P. Menon, Secretary, Ministry of States, New Delhi.' It purported to be from M. Ramachandra Rao, a member of the Council of Action of the State Congress. The letter claimed that the State Congress, at my suggestion, had carried out sabotage operations on a railway train on February 26.

The fact was that the operation was carried out by the Communists and the State Congress had nothing to do with it. I had met M. Ramachandra Rao only once before, early in January. My office immediately inquired of him whether he had written the letter. M. Ramachandra Rao replied that he had not written it. It was a clumsy forgery intended to be read by V. P. Menon, who, it was thought, would promptly have the Agent-General removed from Hyderabad.

On April 7, Sardar called me to Delhi and placed in my hands the minutes of my talk with Laik Ali on March 26 as drawn up by him. The Nizam had sent them to Lord Mountbatten who had passed them on to Sardar.

The document was a very clever performance. It did not report the conversation as it had taken place, but as a monologue put into my mouth. Most of it was a more or less loose summary of what I had said, but with a complete change of emphasis. Here and there wild sentiments had been put into my mouth. 'Ours was a Hindu India', I was alleged to have said. 'Hyderabad was essentially Hindu territory and part of a Hindu State.'

Luckily, the minutes which had been submitted by me to Sardar were before him. Even the tenor of the minutes of the conversation as drafted by Laik Ali clearly showed that

we were discussing the Razakars and not the nature of the Hyderabad State, or of the Union of India. Even according to them, during the conversation I had referred to the need of preserving the position of the Nizam as the Head of the State and of safeguarding the special position of the Muslims in respect of their culture. I had also expressed a hope that Laik Ali would continue to be the Prime Minister and see that Indo-Hyderabad problems were happily settled. The communal bias that had been put in my mouth was entirely unconnected with the context and I should have been a lunatic indeed to have gone on repeating sentiments which even a Hindu Mahasabhaite would not have been foolish enough to express.

The game was easy enough to see through. I was to be got rid of somehow, and if some highly placed persons in New Delhi could be led to believe that I was idiotic enough to express such ultra-communalistic sentiments, I would be asked to resign. In any case, such opinions coming from me could always be used by the Razvi group to discredit the Government of India.

One of the most exciting episodes of the year revolved round Razvi's mysterious speech of March 31.

The Hyderabad 'Weapons Week' had been celebrated at Dar-us-salam, the official headquarters of the Ittehad. On the last day, the 31st, all the Razakars of the suburban districts, with a few members of the District Police displaying their weapons, staged a march past, Razvi taking the salute. Britter of the *London Times* was also present.

After the rally was over, Razvi went into the hall and delivered one of his most violent speeches before a few dozen of his leading workers from the districts. It was in accordance with his practice to collect these workers and provide them with verbal ammunition. The translation of a few of the more purple passages ran as follows:—

Hyderabad is an Islamic State. The Indian Union is trying to wipe out this Muslim rule from the Deccan. Remember that there are four-and-a-half crores of Muslims in the Dominion, looking to us to raise the banner of this Islamic State....

Ittehad expects every Muslim to do his duty. I am glad that Muslim women are also coming forward to help the Razakars. I appeal to my Muslim sisters to support whole-heartedly this movement, and, if possible, to train themselves in the art

of self-defence. The time is not far off when we have to throw our entire weight to maintain the integrity of this Islamic State. We have been ruling the Deccan for the last 800 years and we shall rule it whether the Indian Union likes it or not.

Power has come to the hands of the Indian Union after one thousand years. They are not capable of ruling. That is the reason why they lost it to the Muslims. Now, when that power has come to them, they think they can browbeat us and terrorise us by bullying and blustering....

When once the Indian Union makes any aggression on us, remember the 4½ crores of Muslims will raise the banner of revolt. We will give back in the same coin and speak to them in the same language that they will understand....

I know every one of you is imbued with the spirit of *Jihad*. Remember Karbala. A Muslim is a warrior. He is a first-class fighting man. Indeed, Indian History is full of glorious episodes of the heroism of the Muslims. If India is free to-day, remember, it was due to the sword and arms of the Muslims. A Muslim is a born fighter and a protector of the weak. His one central ambition is to fight for a right and just cause. He will be guided by the great tenets of *Qoran*. Now, my Muslim brothers, onward march. Never put back your sword into the sheath till your object is achieved. Stop not till you reach your goal (cries of *Delhi Chalo*). Hound out the enemy. Do not spare him. Mind not your troubles. We believe in God. We have no other friends except Allah, who has created this Islamic State and who shall never let us down. *Qoran* is in one hand and the sword is in the other, let us march forward; cut our enemies to pieces; establish our Islamic supremacy....

I know the helplessness of our Muslim brothers in the Indian Union. Let us by our example of unsurpassed heroism, courage and vision, extend the much-needed succour to them. They will be our 'Fifth Columnists' in the Union. Now the Union is thinking of a 'Fifth Column' among us. We shall turn the tables and they will understand the character of the Mussalman. A Hindu who is a Kafir, a worshipper of stone and monkey (laughter), who drinks cow's urine and eats cowdung in the name of religion (renewed laughter), and who is a barbarian, in every sense of the word, wants to rule us! What an ambition and what a day-dream!....

My heart is bleeding. The Hindus want to repeat the same holocaust that they had staged at Delhi. Their methods of coercing Hyderabad to be a mere vassal is the typical example of the 'Bania' rule. The only answer to them is the naked sword. I may be here to-day, and perhaps not tomorrow. But I can assure you, my brethren, if you want to see Kasim Razvi in the midst of our life and death struggle, look for him not in the palatial buildings of Banjara, or in pleasant tea parties, but in the midst of the battle-fields (cries of *Allah Ho Akbar and Sid-*

disque-Deccan Zindabad). You will see me slaying or being slain with sword in my hand and the *Qoran* in my body:...

I repeat to you the couplet of the immortal poet Iqbal: 'What's it in life, life is only the means to the end, the eternal end; to lay it down in the cause of Islam.' Now I bid you god-speed; protect your Islamic State; protect your blood brothers in the Indian Union and your Islamic rule.

Shastri, who had been present, read it out to me from his shorthand notes the next day. It was so shocking that I got him to give me a transcript which I posted to Sardar.

On April 7, Sir Walter Monckton went to New Delhi on his monthly visit to conduct the negotiations which led nowhere. It was the first meeting after the ultimatum of March 23, and therefore important from his point of view. The same morning, the *Hindustan Times* came out with a verbatim report of Razvi's speech of the 31st. Naturally, both Lord Mountbatten and Panditji were angry at this outburst. There were questions about it in Parliament and scenes in Government House. Sir Walter felt small.

On April 9, the Deputy Agent-General of Hyderabad in New Delhi sent a frantic message to Laik Ali on the telephone. The speech had put a stop to all negotiations and unless Razvi was asked to hold his tongue, no progress would be made in maintaining contact with Lord Mountbatten.

On the 9th, Venkatrao, the Harijan Minister, under whom Shastri was working, took him to Shah Manzil, the official residence of Laik Ali. Shastri and two or three other Urdu reporters, who had been present at the meeting, were asked to destroy their shorthand notes, if any. When Shastri was asked how it was that the report had come out, he managed to bluff them. He did not know how anyone could have suspected him. When pressed, he said, he would not contradict the report, because his own paper had carried a description of the rally and the salute.

The same day Laik Ali phoned to his Deputy Agent-General at New Delhi that the whole story was a concoction.

Sir Walter Monckton returned to Hyderabad in a temper. The Nizam was angry with Razvi, who at the dictation of Laik Ali, issued a flat denial, on April 10. There had been no mass rally; no salute; no meeting; no speech. The reported speech was a concocted one, presumably by me!

On April 11, I was in New Delhi with the documentary evidence. Razvi's own paper of March 29 had carried an announcement of the forthcoming meeting on the 31st. The issue of the *The Nizam's Gazette* of April 1, had carried a report of the rally, the parade, the salute, and the presence of Mr. Britter of the *London Times*, which ran as follows:—

31st March.

A march past and other military exercises were held by the powerful defensive forces of Razakars of the Majlis to-day. Along with Razvi was Mr. Britter, editor of the *London Times*. The children Razakars' display extracted praise from the people. The interest and seriousness shown by the children Razakars showed how the determination to defend the Asafia Crown and the Sovereignty of Hyderabad has pervaded the well-wishers of the State. In this splendid rally were the Razakars of the depressed Classes too, who had joined the organisation to defend the nation. Although the examinations were very near, the large gathering of students indicated that the students were fully aware of the exigencies of the times. Others present were Mr. Basheer Ahmed, President of the Action Committee. Mr. Sham Sundar, leader of the Depressed Classes and Mr. Mohammad Hissamuddin, the Salar-e-Ala.

I had also in my possession the statement of Shastri and his shorthand notes. The courage which this young journalist had shown on this occasion filled me with admiration. He had not only been able to divert suspicion from himself and retain the confidence of Razvi and Venkatrao, but had not hesitated to give me his signed statement and shorthand notes. The only stipulation he had made was that, if ever an occasion arose to publish his name, I should warn him a day before to enable him to clear out of Hyderabad!

Britter was approached by the Nizam's Government for a statement to the effect that no speech was delivered by Razvi. His reply, as reported to me, was that the Weapons Week, the rally, the parade and the salute were all facts. But he himself had left early; he could not say what had happened thereafter.

Razvi also came to my rescue. On April 6 he issued a direct appeal to Muslim women in the following terms:—

Sisters! You have seen the fate of your innocent and helpless sisters in India. Fate itself is weeping over their plight. History would not forget this tragedy till the Day of Judgment. The men on earth and the angels in heaven curse and condemn what men in India have done in a most brutal manner....

On April 8, he delivered another violent speech in which he stated:

Hyderabad will shortly recover the Ceded districts and the day is not far off when the waves of the Bay of Bengal will be washing the feet of our sovereign, who will not be called the Nizam of Hyderabad and Berar, but also of the Northern Sarkars.

When this speech was reproduced in the *Hindustan Times*, it left no doubt that the mystery speech could have been delivered only by one man, and that was Kasim Razvi.

I was on my trial. Luckily, Dr. Shridharani, a well known journalist associated with the *Amrita Bazar Patrika*, came to Hyderabad specifically to look into this matter.

He met Shastri and reported the incident to Panditji as follows:—

Although a Hindu, he is in the good books of Kasim Razvi, and so he was present at the march-past of the Razakars, especially staged for Britter of the *London Times*. The parade was in the open maidan, but following it there was a meeting of the sub-organizers, not more than 150, in a room. Razvi made his speech there. Not knowing Urdu, Britter stood outside smoking and chatting with some police officials. The reporter himself was grilled on the point by the Prime Minister (Laik Ali). He says that in his presence Razvi himself told the Prime Minister that he was prepared to shoulder the entire responsibility and that there was no need to deny the fact of the speech. But the Prime Minister prevailed on him to issue the denial.

You will appreciate how very difficult it is to deal with any Government which encourages or permits such speeches and such actions which are a negation of decent and civilized behaviour.

On April 7, Razvi's paper came out with the news that I had turned down the suggestion of the State Congress with regard to a settlement with the Nizam's Government. The paper added: 'Peace-loving Hindus do not like the increasing interference of Mr. Munshi in the internal affairs of Hyderabad.' A leading Ittehad also gave out in an interview that I was the *de facto* President of the State Congress and must be called back to Delhi. This settlement was alleged to have been made by B. Ramakrishna Rao. Those who made this allegation could have had no idea that he was in daily touch with me.

Among the papers which Raja Bahadur Aravamudu Ay-

yangar gave me for use is the copy of a letter written to a friend in high position in New Delhi on April 14, 1948. It thus describes the situation:—

Out there I dare say you would be knowing what the situation in Hyderabad is like. The situation is deteriorating day by day and there has been an exodus for the third time of the Hindu population of this place. All this is due to the unsettled state of affairs that now exists owing to the fact that the Fascist element in the State represented by the Ittihad-ul-Muslimeen organisation is practically ruling the country. But the latest move seems to be to somehow or other manoeuvre to get rid of Mr. Munshi.

Ever since Mr. Munshi came here as Agent-General, his presence has been a source of great solace and has made the Hindus of this place feel a little bit braver than they used to be. Local papers dare not give correct news. They are censored and you will have noticed that the *Deccan Chronicle* has been for the last so many weeks, until just a day or two ago, been keeping the Editorial column blank with a big question mark.

The entry of papers, like the *Free Press Journal* of Bombay and the *Indian Express* of Madras, has been banned.

In regard to papers that are not banned, the packets of papers are opened at the Airways office and if the authorities entrusted with that duty find that there is something objectionable from their point of view, they completely confiscate the whole of that day's bundle of papers.

Statements are not allowed to be issued by public men and if, in spite of that, anybody dares to publish a statement, he is interned. Such being the case, the presence of a person of Mr. Munshi's standing has been a source of great relief to those who want to ventilate their grievances and have the satisfaction of having had the opportunity of letting an Indian Union's Agent know what is happening. Whether actually any redress is obtained or not is a different question. But people at least expect that if the atrocities that are committed are brought to the notice of the Indian Union, some day there will be a chance of the position improving.

The Ittihad-ul-Muslimeen has now started a vendetta against Mr. Munshi and the chorus in every Ittihad paper is to the effect that Mr. Munshi must go.

It may be that if Mr. Munshi goes some other Agent-General comes here, but during the period that Mr. Munshi has been here, he has come to know a great deal of the happenings both in the City and in the districts, and the object of this people is that at this juncture such a person should not be permitted to stay here. I wanted that this aspect should be made known to Panditji and Sardarji.

CHAPTER XXI

MONCKTON'S FORMULA AND ITS FATE

ON April 5, 1948, Laik Ali sent his reply to V. P. Menon's letter of March 23, but addressed to Panditji. He countercharged the Government of India with failure to implement the Standstill Agreement and tried to explain away the charges made against the Nizam's Government.

On the essentials he was unyielding. There was going to be *no* accession and the Nizam's Government was not bound by the States Forces Scheme. The question of the Razakars would not arise till India came to a satisfactory agreement. The Standstill Agreement was rejected.

About this time Sir Walter appears to have made it clear to the Nizam and Laik Ali that they should form a new Government of non-Ittehadī Muslims and Hindus to whom New Delhi could not take exception.

I had no illusions about this advice. I found it impossible to believe that so clear-sighted a man as Monckton could imagine that such a thing was possible. If the Nizam appointed as his Ministers non-Ittehadī Muslims and Hindus acceptable to New Delhi, the occupation of Razvi and Laik Ali would go.

The last visit of Sir Walter to New Delhi had persuaded Kasim Razvi and Laik Ali that the storm created by the letters of March 23, had blown over. They were also under the impression that the States Ministry and the Agent-General of India had been by-passed.

On April 9, however, I submitted a memorandum to the States Ministry on the economic vulnerability of Hyderabad, in which I had worked out the steps necessary for bringing economic pressure. In the meantime, I continued to track down smuggling. The strict watch maintained by the Provincial Governments in the border areas had already created difficulties in the way of the Nizam's Government smuggling arms, ammunition and other materials likely to be useful in an armed conflict into the State. The feelings of the people in these areas were also running so high that they exerted their utmost to prevent smuggling.

In the middle of April, Partiyal, a Hyderabad enclave in the Province of Madras, declared independence. The Nizam's Government was anxious to take its army through our territory to recapture the place. The permission was refused.

Sir Walter Monckton now evolved a new formula which would ease the situation by itself. The Union was not to worry about either the Standstill Agreement, or a permanent arrangement with Hyderabad. It provided that—

- (i) The Nizam should bring Razvi under control by banning the processions and demonstrations of the Razakars;
- (ii) the Government should be reconstructed by bringing progressive elements into it;
- (iii) a Constituent Assembly should be brought into existence;
- (iv) on the Assembly coming into existence, a Government responsible to it should be set up.

The formula was gladly accepted by Lord Mountbatten and Panditji. Sardar also accepted it. He said with a solemn face that if Lord Mountbatten could secure these concessions from the Nizam, he would cease to insist on the accession of Hyderabad. He had a rare sense of humour.

Laik Ali played for a time with the idea of reconstituting his ministry. The Nizam himself called Pannalal Pittie and assured him that he was willing to do something for the people, though he would not deal with the State Congress. Laik Ali also requested Pannalal to help in reconstituting a government on the basis of a 50 : 50 Muslim-non-Muslim ratio, assuring him in his facile way that Sardar had agreed to it. I had only to ring up Sardar in Pannalal's presence to convince him that this was untrue.

Razvi who saw through the Monckton formula was, as usual, very frank. Addressing the Razakars he declared:

If one soldier of the Union passed into Hyderabad, my Razakars will cross the border into Madras and fight for Hyderabad for a hundred years.....

You know that the Indian Union is a Union of Brahmans and Baniyas. Accession was the cry at first; having failed in that, the cry of responsible government was raised. A clever cry it was; for, once responsible government was achieved, Hyderabad could be made to accede and the *Majlis* with its Razakars could easily be liquidated. You alone foiled their plans.

At the end of this speech Razvi was given the title of '*Mujahid-e-Azam*', the Great Fighter of the Holy War.

It was, perhaps, on the same day that the great *Mujahid-e-Azam* hopefully announced that the day was not far off when the waves of the Bay of Bengal would wash the feet of his beloved ruler.

This announcement was published in the *Daily News*, dated April 13, 1948.

He also turned his attention to me:

We are all aware that Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru is not willing to take any action *suo moto* against Hyderabad and that he is anxious to resolve the deadlock by all peaceful means. So is the Governor-General, Mountbatten, who does not wish to make Hyderabad problem into another long-drawn out controversy in the present world set up. In that case where does Mr. Munshi stand? He will be nowhere. His importance will be lost. It is indeed a pity that a politician of the calibre of Mr. Munshi should attempt to sacrifice the interest of a great State like Hyderabad and the people for whose welfare he professes to have a soft heart in their hour of trial and tribulation to his own lust of power! Could there be a greater tragedy?

A few days later, commenting on Panditji's speech, Razvi said:

The will of the masses of India is evident from the assassination of Mahatma Gandhi and the evil designs of the R.S.S. and the Hindu Mahasabha, which aim at the wholesale massacre and extermination of Muslims. Panditji is free to act according to such a 'will of the masses', but in Hyderabad this will of *his* masses cannot be allowed to operate... The masses, in accordance with whose will Panditji is pressing for the introduction of responsible Government in Hyderabad, are the masses who have shed the Muslim blood in India like water and on instigation from India are shedding the Muslim blood in Hyderabad too.

Having advised the Nizam to accept his formula, Sir Walter Monckton left for England on April 19. He would only return—he was reported to have said—if a genuinely representative government was set up.

But the Nizam could neither dispense with nor control Razvi. Even if the Nizam as well as Laik Ali, Moin Nawaz and Deen Yar Jung, had to bring the Ittehad under control, the army and the police, being predominantly Ittehadis, there was no agency by which they could enforce the mandate.

Again, the formula was illusory; for no Hindu, except a pure Ittehad stooge, would have been prepared to take office in the Nizam's Government as it was. He would have had the sense to realise that he would not continue in office for a moment longer if he went against the Ittehad.

As soon as Sir Walter had left, the Nizam and Laik Ali gave their reply. They rejected all the four points of the Monckton formula and said, in effect, that they knew their own business best and that Delhi was talking nonsense.

By his *Firman* of April 22, the Nizam gave his formal reactions to the formula. He reiterated his dynastic pledge to treat all classes in the State as equal, and rejected the proposal for responsible government as emanating from outside authority and likely to introduce 'poison' into Hyderabad. He hoped, however, to associate representatives of all important sections with his government.

Laik Ali, sweet and evasive as ever, was equally firm. In an address which he delivered to the Legislative Council of Hyderabad, he said that he would maintain an honourable position and that therefore there would be no accession. Simple incidents had been exaggerated by the Indian Press; there was no trouble in Hyderabad. The trouble was that it was subjected to an economic blockade and unwarrantable propaganda. Their cause, he said, was just. If force were used, they would resist it with all their might and leave everything in the hands of Providence. He did not pay the Monckton formula even the courtesy of a reference.

Meanwhile every effort was being made by the Nizam's Government to speed up military preparations. The armed forces were rapidly being put on a war footing. The authorized strength of the Hyderabad Forces under the State Forces Scheme was 7,000. This had been unauthorizedly raised to 13,000 in 1947. By the end of April, 1948, the strength of the Regulars was 22,393, while 7,000 more men were under training and an additional force of 4,870 men was undergoing training under different names such as the Customs Constabulary. The target of the Nizam's Government was three divisions.

The strength of the Police Force had also been raised to 38,000 men, of whom about 12,000 were armed reservists equipped with such modern weapons as were available. In addition, there were 15,000 Home and Civic Guards. Lastly,

the armed Razakars numbered anything from 50,000 to 1,00,000.

Eight factories in the State were busy manufacturing arms and large-scale petrol reserves had been built up. Power alcohol was being produced at the rate of 3,500 gallons per day. In addition to the barrack accommodation for 22,000 men, new barracks for an additional 25,000 men were under construction.

An Air Service Corps was under training and new airports were being constructed at Hyderabad and Bidar. An adventurer named Sydney Cotton had been hired to smuggle arms by air and by June, aerial gun-running to Hyderabad from Pakistan had become a regular feature.

In spite of the vigilance maintained by the Union Police on the borders, a vast net-work of agents all over India was trying to smuggle arms, ammunitions, vehicles, equipment, petrol, high-grade steel, broadcasting materials, chemicals required for explosives and motor-spare-parts into Hyderabad. Any one who could come forward with some scheme for the strengthening of Hyderabad was sure of financial support.

It was reported that an arrangement had been made with the Nawab of Makalla for the import of Arabs into Hyderabad; another such arrangement, I understood, had also been made with some of the Middle East countries for buying arms and ammunition and to store them at Makalla.

CHAPTER XXII

PANDITJI SPEAKS

ON April 24, I met Panditji in Bombay, where he had come to attend a meeting of the All India Congress Committee. I had met him several times since January in New Delhi and on all these occasions he had been correct and even cordial, but distant. He had not even encouraged me to talk about Hyderabad but had left its problems to Lord Mountbatten and Sardar participating only in important consultations.

On this occasion, however, I explained the position to him fully, and he assured me that the time for action would soon come.

Ramachari, Ramakrishna Rao, Pannalal Pittie, Ranga Reddy and Dhoot were also introduced to him by me and they had a long private talk with him in the course of which they apprised him of what was happening.

At a secret session of the A. I. C. C., which as a diplomatic agent I was asked not to attend, there was strong criticism of the dilatoriness of Government's policy towards Hyderabad.

Panditji was very forthright in his reply. His stand had a heartening effect on the whole country. He had spoken in Hindi and his speech had either been misunderstood or misreported in the newspapers as saying that there were only two courses open to Hyderabad: war or accession. This produced a thrill throughout the country.

According to Campbell-Johnson, Lord Mountbatten was 'horrified' at the report of the speech,¹ and drew Panditji's attention to its implications. A corrected version of what Panditji had said was issued. 'If, in spite of the indications that they had', he had said, 'the Nizam's Government continued to connive at the exploits of Razakars, their connivance was liable to be regarded by the Indian Government as a hostile act.'

On April 26, at a reception given to him by the Bombay Union of Journalists, Panditji once again defined the stand of

¹ *Mission with Mountbatten*, p. 320.

the Government of India: 'If the safety of the people in Hyderabad was endangered by the activities of Razakars, the Government would intervene in Hyderabad State. The time had arrived when this hostility must cease. If the Hyderabad Government could not stop it, other measures would be adopted.'

Some of the Hyderabad leaders also met in Bombay and after anxious consideration, the majority of them decided that, if invited, they would join the new government only on the conditions that there was a Hindu majority in the legislature, a constituent assembly was convened on a population basis and a ban placed on the Razakars.

My view, which I frankly told them, was that none of the conditions on which they were banking would ever be agreed to by the Nizam or the Ittehad. I asked them, however, to see Sardar at Dehra Dun. When they saw him, he told the leaders not to worry about Hyderabad affairs; he would, he said, look after them. The superb self-confidence of Sardar was infectious; they came back scarcely enlightened, but greatly heartened.

By the end of April, arrangements had been completed by the Nizam's Government to establish first-class machinery to carry on international propaganda against India. So set up, the machinery continued to function till September. Claude Scott, formerly of the *Times of India*, was in charge of the Information Department in Hyderabad and a very competent publicity agent was employed in the United Kingdom. The support of several international publicity agencies was also secured.

From the end of April the most formidable instrument of the Nizam's Government was the group of foreign correspondents who enjoyed the lavish hospitality of the State at the Greenlands Guest House. They were royally feasted, looked after by charming hostesses, and taken on conducted tours. They were the voice of the Nizam's Information Department.

Some of the foreign correspondents were good enough to call on me. They heard the Indian case with courtesy and examined the documents I placed before them, but the weak tea that I offered them could not be expected to make the same impression on them as the flowing champagne served in Green-

lands. Most of them adopted the Ittehad view that India was trying to deprive Hyderabad of its sovereignty most wickedly.

The only exception was Kingsley Martin of the *New Statesman and Nation*. He visited Hyderabad, saw things for himself and wrote a thundering article against Hyderabad. It ran:

The Nizam, badly advised and egged on by the irresponsible backing of such wild supporters as Mr. Churchill (utterly ignorant of the nature of the British rule in the past, now displays an even more splendid unawareness of the conditions of the present), decided on a bid for an independence he never had before. He began by trying to become a Dominion on his own account, and was balked. He tried by buying a seaport to gain him an outlet to the sea, and could not. He was offered by Sardar Patel an arrangement similar to the one he had with the British; and he hesitated, hoping yet to become a sovereign State.

The antipathy of the foreign correspondents towards India was not unexpected. A certain shrewd foreigner, once questioned on the subject, gave me an interesting explanation of this.

‘Our sympathies are generally against the Hindu. We can understand the Muslim. He eats with us; he looks up to us with respect. We do not understand the Hindu, however much he may try to accommodate himself to us. We always suspect that in his heart of hearts he is passing a critical judgment on us. We think his ways inferior; he thinks ours to be inferior. And we are not very sure whether in those spheres of life where we consider ourselves adepts, he does not generally beat us.’

By the end of April, the Razakar menace was broadening out into a serious national danger.

In the month of April, while the Government of India appeared to be in earnest in enforcing their demands, the Ittehad group had begun to look for allies in the prospective conflict with India. Mukhдум Moi ud-Din, the Communist leader, who was then underground, was amongst those whom they contacted.

On May 4, 1948, the Nizam’s Government lifted the ban on the Communist organization in Hyderabad and the arrest warrants against Narayana Reddy and other leading Communists were cancelled.

This news took even the Razakar journals by surprise. The Ittehad organ, The *Daily Meezan* suddenly changed its tone towards the Communists. The brutal treatment of villagers, which had so far been attributed to the Communists, was now fathered on the State Congress workers. It was discovered that the Communists were for the defence of Hyderabad against the Union and were therefore nearer to the Razakars than the Congressites.

Another daily newspaper with pro-Ittehad leanings expressed surprise at the withdrawal of the ban on the Communists. However in the end it observed that 'It is however possible that there may be some special reasons behind this measure.' Referring to the Communists, one of the Ittehad leaders was reported to have stated, 'At least they (the Communists) have an ideology of their own whereas the Congressites have no ideology.'

Simultaneously the Communist Party of Hyderabad issued a pamphlet reversing their earlier policy. The accession of Hyderabad to the Union and responsible Government in the State were denounced on the ground that the Government of India was a capitalist government. To maintain a show of consistency, it was suggested that before real freedom was achieved, feudalism had also to be liquidated. The reports indicated that not only was there some understanding between the Nizam's Government and the Communists, but explosives were in process of being supplied to the Razakars by the Communists from West Bengal.

The new attitude of the Communists was characteristic. Whatever was their view for the moment, was the voice of the people; what suited them, was always in the people's interests. According to their new propaganda line the accession of the Indian States to the Union was a gross anti-democratic act, calculated to crush the revolutionary consciousness and the democratic movements of the people. If the Indian Armies marched into Hyderabad, it would be to crush the people's movement. They, therefore, exhorted their workers to resist the movement of the troops wherever the people's Government—that is, their little Soviets holding the villages by terror, murder and arson—was established.

The Communist Party now allied itself with the Nizam's Government on an anti-Indian front. The Communists who

had gone underground in India crossed over to Hyderabad. Absconders from the Indian territory took refuge in the State and some of the Communist leaders moved about freely in Hyderabad, established contact with some of the Ministers and high officers of the State, and tried to arrive at a pact with the Nizam. They also hoped that a representative of theirs might be taken in the Hyderabad Cabinet for that would be the thin end of infiltration into the Nizam's Government.

This alliance with the Nizam's Government enabled the Communists to strengthen their hold over the areas already dominated by them as well as to spread their activity to other districts. After April, in the villages so dominated, the lands, cattle and grain of the well-to-do villagers were distributed among the pro-Communist peasants, and the loot gathered from raided villages continued to fill their war chests. The reports showed that in the month of July alone, there were as many as forty such raids.

The Communists now claimed that they had liberated over 3,000 villages. This was an exaggeration; but the number could not have been less than 2,000.

The expectation of the Communists was that if the Nizam's Government continued to reject all efforts to arrive at a friendly association with the Union, the economy as well as the law and order structure of Hyderabad would eventually collapse. In that event, the Communist Party of India would inherit Hyderabad.

It was a wonder to me all this time how those who were trying to secure the Nizam's signature on a piece of paper at New Delhi expected to arrest this menace.

Who was to enforce the pledge that the Nizam would undertake by a fresh Agreement? When every pledge under the Standstill Agreement had been broken so flagrantly, what sanction would hold the Nizam to a plebiscite, or to giving a fair deal to the Hindus? How was he to remain friendly with India and not integrate Hyderabad economically with Pakistan?

And if the pledges continued to be flouted, what was to prevent an upheaval which would endanger the whole of the South? What was there to prevent the emergence of a powerful and hostile State ruled by the fanatic Ittehad or the more determined Communists in the very heart of India?

In the meantime, the Communists continued their attempts to build up a Sovietised Andhra by means of terror.

The Government of India, however, was then carrying on military operations in Kashmir which, it was possible, might spread and develop into a regular war with Pakistan. This aspect weighed with New Delhi, not only because of its domestic repercussions, but also its wider consequences.

CHAPTER XXIII

CAMPBELL-JOHNSON PAYS A VISIT

LORD Mountbatten had set his heart on settling the Indo-Hyderabad problem before his term expired. He wanted to end his fateful career in India in a blaze of glory by presenting an association with Hyderabad, whatever form it took.

On May 1, he wrote to the Nizam that he would be leaving India in six-and-half weeks' time. Would the Nizam be pleased to come to New Delhi to meet him?

On my first visit to Lord Mountbatten in December, he had told me his idea of how the problem could be solved. Once the Nizam was induced to come to Delhi, there would be no difficulty in securing his signature on the Instrument of Accession. Then everything would be all right. The hope of realising this idea had seized Lord Mountbatten's mind. The Nizam, if once he comes to New Delhi, would be persuaded to accede.

The Nizam returned the compliment. Would His Excellency be pleased to come to Hyderabad? So far as he himself was concerned, he would not come to New Delhi. If he came, he would be misunderstood.

In the meantime, Sir Walter Monckton was working hard for the Nizam in England and had started discussions with the Labour Government.

When Lord Mountbatten had been to Bangalore, Sir Mirza Ismail, whom the Nizam kept on the line through Hosh, appears to have suggested a meeting between the Governor-General and the Nizam which suggestion he conveyed to the Nizam by his letter dated May 1, 1948. Sir Mirza had also written to Lord Mountbatten:

Your Excellency could have explained the position in a more forceful and convincing manner, and heard his views, and in this way you would have, as I have said, prepared the ground for a settlement, leaving the details to be settled by others. I do not think I need say more.¹

Sir Mirza, directly, as well as through Hosh, was in touch with me. It surprised me that so shrewd a politician should have had such an unreal picture of Ala Hazrat in his mind.

¹ Sir Mirza Ismail: *My Public Life*, p. 112.

In May, I spent a few days with Sardar at Mussoorie, where he was convalescing.

It had been suggested to him that I should be replaced by a military officer. Some circles in New Delhi were of the view that if I were to be removed from my office, it would be easy to settle the Indo-Hyderabad problem. They were unhappy that Sardar continued to have faith in me and was not prepared to agree to this suggestion. He told me the whole story with a cynical smile together with his own reaction to the suggestion.

For some time I had been in touch with the Ministry of Defence, as also with General Goddard of the Southern Command and Major-General Chaudhuri, then Chief of the General Staff, so that I had some idea of the preparations that were being made.

Since summer had set in and Bolarum was getting warm, I went to Bangalore for a change. But it was scarcely a change in occupation.

If trouble came, I had to arrange for the shifting of my office to Bangalore. I had also been pressing both Sardar and Sardar Baldev Singh, the Defence Minister, to raise four battalions of armed police reserves in Mysore.

If the political issues were settled between the Union and Hyderabad, the disbanded Razakars and the thousands of Muslims who had been attracted from different parts of India by propaganda or inducement, would not easily become reconciled to the change. In that event, no Government in Hyderabad would have the slightest change of implementing the new policy unless it had at its disposal 10,000 loyal troops or reserve police to maintain order.

On the other hand, if there was no settlement and the Razakars continued to operate, the increasingly disturbed conditions on the Hyderabad border would require a trained force to prevent disorder spreading to the South.

In my view of things, therefore, a strong security force was necessary to supplement the police. With energetic co-operation of Sri Mariappa, then the Home Minister of Mysore, my work of raising the battalions became easy.

In Bangalore I had another very interesting experience. Chaperoned by an elderly Begum, some charming young ladies from Hyderabad were cultivating the society of our military officers. They kept open house and entertained lavishly. There were dances, dinners, dances again and late suppers.

Bangalore is the summer resort of the South. The year before this, the Hyderabad notabilities and Indian military officers on leave had congregated here to spend their holiday. The change from 1947 to 1948 was so abrupt that most of the military officers who came to these parties thrown by the visitors from Hyderabad, were unable to realize the difference, and talked. The intelligence reports showed that the conversation often drifted to army movements on the borders of Hyderabad.

About the same time, an orderly of a *paiga* jagirdar—a staunch Razakar—was reported to be watching my movements and giving expression to murderous intentions. Mariappa was swift and thorough. The orderly and his friends were locked up and the begums left for Hyderabad, their merry-making ended.

Reports came to me that a young and accomplished lady of Hyderabad was living in a flat at Colaba in Bombay, where she was cultivating the friendship of our army officers. She, it appeared, was deeply interested in what was happening in military circles in Bombay, Poona and Sholapur. Sri Morarji, then the Home Minister of Bombay, came to her rescue and she was ordered to leave the city. She protested, and she cried, but in vain. Her mother, suddenly recalled from England, angrily invaded *Dakshina Sadan*. I told her that from my experience as the father of grown-up daughters it was dangerous for a young lady, untethered to a husband, to live away from her parents. It was wicked, I said, and I appealed to the maternal instincts of the elderly lady. She was, however, inconsolable. I understood that later the young lady played hostess to the foreign correspondents at the Greenland Guest House.

About this time there was a sudden brain-wave in Government House, New Delhi. The Nizam was surrounded by enemies and was really frightened. Campbell-Johnson, the

Press Attache to Lord Mountbatten, should quietly go to Hyderabad as the 'King's messenger', on 'a mission of unknown dimensions and opportunity'. He would assess the Nizam's position. His 'magic touch' would perhaps bring about a palace revolution; an accession would follow. The Government of India would always be there to protect the Nizam against his enemies. The 'King's messenger' was to go under the auspices of the Hyderabad Government and in consultation with the Hyderabad Agent-General in New Delhi.¹

India's Agent-General simply did not exist for these hopefuls. But I received a message from Sardar that Campbell-Johnson was coming to Hyderabad and that I should go there immediately and 'look after' him. I did not know the purpose for which he was coming and I scarcely relished this intrusion. What was Campbell-Johnson up to now, I wondered?

I immediately flew to Hyderabad. Such a distinguished emissary deserved the highest consideration at my hands. My Secretary, therefore, received him at the airport and extended an invitation to him to dine with me at *Dakshina Sadan*.

Campbell-Johnson was surprised at my presence in Hyderabad. He was the guest of Laik Ali, who was in his confidence about the visit. He could accept, my invitation—of India's representative—only after securing the consent of his host!

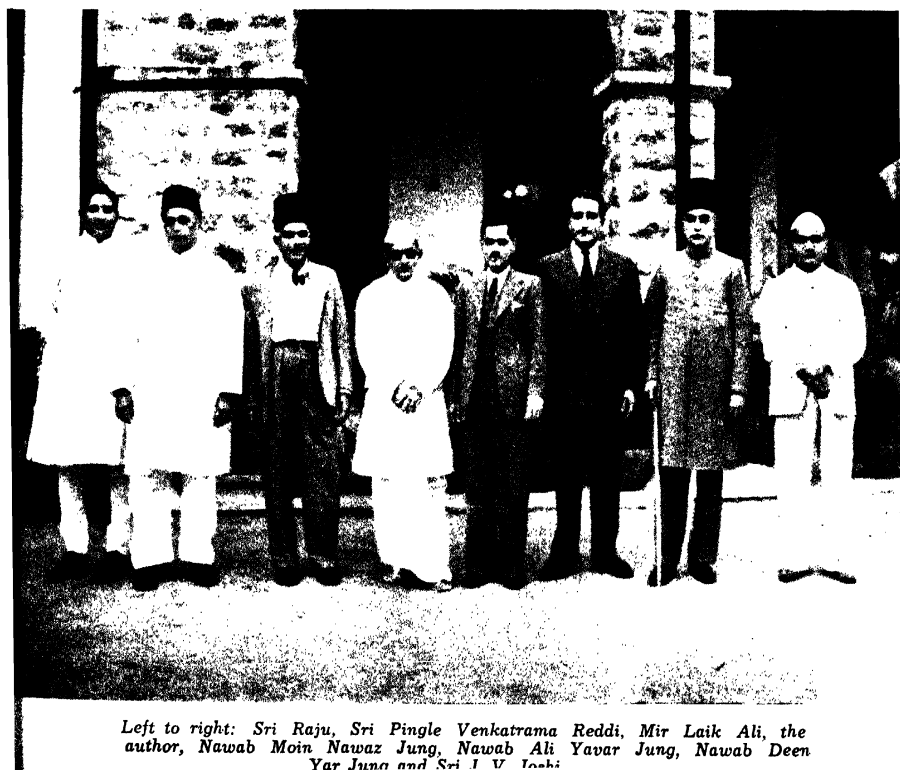
The situation was Gilbertian. An emissary of the Head of the Government, of which I was the Agent, had come to Hyderabad and was the guest of the Prime Minister of Hyderabad, who had rejected every friendly approach. He was accepting lavish hospitality from Laik Ali while I was being kept in ignorance of the visit, or the purpose for which he had come. He contacted people behind my back and I was not expected to know what he was doing. At the same time I was facing all the criticism, social ostracism and hostility which the ingenuity of the Nizam or the Ittehad could devise. Evidently I was a hostile both to the Nizam and Lord Mountbatten.

Campbell-Johnson saw the Nizam, but was denied the opportunity of applying the 'magic touch' which he had come all the way from Delhi to apply. Laik Ali was present during all the interviews and the Nizam remained firm. He would not

¹ For Campbell-Johnson's version, vide *Mission with Mountbatten*, p. 325.



Nawab Moin Nawaz Jung, the author and Mir Laik Ali at a garden party.



Left to right: Sri Raju, Sri Pingle Venkatrama Reddi, Mir Laik Ali, the author, Nawab Moin Nawaz Jung, Nawab Ali Yavar Jung, Nawab Deen Yar Jung and Sri I. V. Joshi



Kasim Razvi

come to Delhi, he said, and as the Governor-General had no time to go to Hyderabad, what else could the Exalted do but bid him good-bye? And, anyway, what could he (Lord Mountbatten) hope to do in a month?

On the political aspect of the visit, the Nizam displayed a peculiar sense of humour. He was helpless, he said; he was only a constitutional head of Hyderabad; he could do nothing without consulting his Cabinet; he could have nothing to say on a private basis. At the same time, he wound up the discussion by saying that constitutional monarchy had no meaning in the East, and trying to interest Campbell-Johnson in the Muslim philosophy of life.

Campbell-Johnson met me at dinner that night. He told me that his was a personal visit of courtesy on behalf of Lord Mountbatten. He had seen the Nizam, he said, found him resigned to his fate and not inclined to be helpful. I told him that in my view Hyderabad did not mean business, and that the Nizam was still the master of the situation and could save it if he wanted. I did not find Campbell-Johnson in any way interested in the sufferings of the people imposed by the present regime, or the Communist menace.

The next day, Johnson had friendly talks with Laik Ali, Razvi and El Edroos. Incidentally, he collected critical comments about me. He also gave a press interview and met a few leaders at Laik Ali's reception, where Generiwal and the Razakar leaders openly fell out. Then he flew to Warangal with General El Edroos. On the 18th he returned to New Delhi.

Campbell-Johnson's visit strengthened the feelings in the ruling circles in Hyderabad that the Union was too weak to take any action. The plane on which the negotiations were being conducted through 'a King's Emissary' had fed the Nizam's vanity and Razvi's arrogance.

On March 26 the Government of India had made certain definite demands on the Nizam, but as soon as the negotiations for settlement were resumed, the demands were forgotten, and a disclaimer thrown out that no action was contemplated.

In the middle of April, New Delhi had blessed the Monckton formula. It was ridiculed and rejected by the Nizam and Laik Ali.

On April 24 Panditji called upon Laik Ali to fulfil four concrete demands. These were unceremoniously turned down. New Delhi immediately showed its anxiety to re-open negotiations.

On May 15 the States Ministry called upon the Nizam's Government to take immediate steps to put an end to the activities of the Razakars. On the same day, Campbell-Johnson, while enjoying Laik Ali's hospitality, was feverishly urging that the negotiations should be resumed.

What else could the Ittehad, with its background, think of New Delhi except that it had no strength?

In the meantime, the movement sponsored by the State Congress was petering out for want of men and money. The patience of the people was exhausted. They were saying openly that the Union had let them down. Most of the leaders who had expected help from Government were in agony and their faith in us had almost gone.

During all this time, Razvi was continuing to organise the Razakars and delivering venomous speeches against the Union. 15,000 refugees were under training.

On May 11, in the uniform of a general (or was it a marshal's?), Razvi took the salute from over 30,000 Razakars. 'Hyderabad', he said, 'should be the garden of crusaders'. 'The Nizam', he added, 'was not one of those Maharajas who would become Rajpramukhs!' He referred to the compromise proposals with contempt. 'Why are you asking me for a Round Table Conference?' he asked at a public meeting. 'Why not go to Bombay, Madras, Bezwada (now Vijayawada) and Sholapur and worship before the goddesses of the Indian Union?' The word he used for 'goddesses' was *devio*, a word used by Hindus to denote respectable women.

Venkatarao, his Harijan lieutenant, indulged in similar heroics. He assured the audience that the Muslims and the Depressed Classes would safeguard the independence of Hyderabad at the risk of their lives. 'Only the previous day', he said, 'the Ittehad Harijans, assisted by the Razakars, had burnt down Gorta and flung men and women into the burning houses.'

On the 3rd, Razvi, when referring to responsible government, said in a public speech:

'What kind of freedom have you (India) achieved? You (India) presume to deliver sermons on freedom to the world. But just look at yourself, look at your condition and see what kind of freedom you have achieved. There is Pakistan in your neighbourhood; take a lesson from it. It can teach you constitution and law. The main purpose behind law is peace and prosperity. Everywhere in India you find anarchy. (It is) a country where there is no peace and security and where loot and murder are of daily occurrence. (On the other hand) there is no oppression and anarchy in your State.'

On June 9 he said:

Muslims have always created a new geography for themselves. Very soon the boundaries of Hyderabad will expand far beyond Delhi, and the Asafia Flag will fly over Delhi. Yes, I am seeing the Nizam (*Asafe-Sabia*) marching towards Delhi.

On June 10 he said:

Following the example of Muslims of early days they should not remain content with the small piece of Pakistan..... We are re-writing the map of India by bringing together a union of Jumna and Musi (the river which ran by Hyderabad). We are the grandsons of Mahmood Ghaznavi and the sons of Babar. When determined, we shall fly the Asaf Jahi Flag on the Red Fort.

'They (the Muslims) would not be content with one Pakistan in the Deccan,' said Razvi again. 'They would knit India and the world into Pakistan. Did not their forebears do the same thing 1,300 years ago?' he concluded.

In another speech on June 12, he said:

It is because, as they themselves say, when Lord Mountbatten leaves India, massacres will start again. My Hindu brethren, the Muslims have ruled over you (Hindus) for 900 years; therefore, I have sympathy with you. If I had wished, I could have exterminated you.

And on most of these occasions when Razvi was delivering these speeches, he was supported on the platform by one or other of the colleagues of Laik Ali in the Ministry.

What did the protracted negotiations between March and July cost Hyderabad and the country? The Nizam's Government spent crores of rupees in preparing for a futile military conflict and for financing the Razakars. The people suffered heavy loss of life. The Government of India had to foot a

heavy bill for military preparations, police action, and for establishing order thereafter.

The total loss inflicted by Communist activities, which flared up from March, 1948, is difficult to assess. In 1950, Ravi Narayan Reddy, a leading Communist, submitted an estimate to his own party, in which he claimed that over 3,000 persons had been murdered and 3,800 dacoities committed in the two or three preceding years. Between February, 1948, and August of 1950, the well-entrenched Communists who had gone underground in these districts were responsible for 223 murders, 24 kidnapping cases and burning 199 houses.

After the Police Action, the Hyderabad Government had to take drastic measures till 1952 when only the three Communist ridden districts were brought to normalcy. The Government of India contributed a sum of Rs. 60 lakhs to the expenses of this campaign. The Police Budget of the State which in 1948-49 was Rs. 2,46,83,995 rose to Rs. 5,64,30,083 in 1950-51, to Rs. 6,91,71,156 in 1951-52 and Rs. 4,72,22,000 in 1952-53. These figures do not include the expenditure on the military forces which were also employed in the State for restoring law and order.

In addition, the removal of the Communist menace involved the State in a heavy expenditure for maintaining 9,000 home-guards; enrolling 553 village chaukidars; setting up new villages to accommodate the people of the Lambada *thanas* which served as hide-outs for the Communists. To this must be added the cost of large-scale ameliorative measures in Warangal and Nalgonda and of the six hundred miles of the fair-weather road, that had to be constructed to open up the forests.

The activities of the Communists and the Razakars between March and September also imposed a heavy burden on the people, through forcible collection of subscriptions; burning of villages and village records; looting of property; murder of suspects, hostiles and village officers; attack on police, home-guards and officers and men, and the destruction of police stations by the Communists and the reprisal atrocities of the Razakars.

CHAPTER XXIV

MORE CONCESSIONS

NAWAB Zain Yar Jung, the Agent-General of Hyderabad in New Delhi, was a shrewd and sensible member of the Hyderabad aristocracy. His charming manners had made a considerable impression upon several circles in New Delhi, and particularly upon General Bucher, the Commander-in-Chief. His word was also accepted that the reports of the Razakars' activities were exaggerated. Incidentally, his reasonable approach to Hyderabad's accession to India led to a curious belief that he represented the ruling group in Hyderabad. When Zain, therefore, set out to bring about a settlement, he emerged the man of destiny for the moment.

For some time, Lord Mountbatten even played with the idea of solving the whole problem by shoving Zain Yar Jung in Laik Ali's seat. But few persons in New Delhi knew that he was on the black-list of the Ittehad. If Laik Ali and Moin Nawaz maintained him in Delhi as their Agent, it was only because he was a convenient, though innocent, decoy and was better away from Hyderabad than in it.

But Lord Mountbatten was all for settlement. The fact that Campbell-Johnson's mission was criticised by the Press throughout India made no difference.

On May 23, Laik Ali went to Delhi. I was not surprised; it was an expected outcome of Campbell-Johnson's visit.

Suddenly V. P. Menon became very reticent with me on the telephone and I learnt that Laik Ali had developed a chastened mood. He saw V. P. Menon and appealed to him to apply his 'fertile mind' to the finding of a solution. When next I talked to Sardar on the phone, his laugh was cynical.

The new line which Lord Mountbatten pursued was to induce Laik Ali to introduce responsible government in Hyderabad and to hold a plebiscite on the question of accession.

At first Laik Ali was polite but firm. Responsible government was out of the question, for it would lead to accession. So was plebiscite, because that would lead to further

deterioration of the law and order situation. 'I am willing to resign my office, if someone else can secure accession,' he said.

He took up the same position which he had maintained since January in his discussions with me, and which the Ittehad had taken from August, 1947. He was all for a treaty between India and Hyderabad covering Defence, External Affairs and Communications. But the agreement on these three Central subjects would not concede the Union any power to enact overriding legislation in respect of them applying to Hyderabad. It must be left to the honour of Hyderabad, he contended, to pass legislation in respect of these subjects parallel to the laws of the Union. He was anxious to pledge words, but give no guarantees.

In a couple of days, however, his attitude underwent a miraculous change. He was accommodating beyond belief. At a conference held on May 26, at which Lord Mountbatten, Panditji and V. P. Menon were present, he accepted the draft that had been prepared by V. P. Menon.

The terms agreed upon were—

- (i) Defence, External Affairs and Communications should vest in the Union carrying with it an overriding legislative power.
- (ii) The strength of the armed forces of Hyderabad would not exceed 20,000 men, of whom 60% were to be non-Muslims and the State Forces Scheme was to apply to them. All irregular forces were to be disbanded.
- (iii) Hyderabad was to have no political relations with foreign countries.
- (iv) An interim Government with not less than 40% non-Muslims as Ministers was to be set up immediately.
- (v) A constituent Assembly was to be formed at latest by January 1, 1949—not less than 60% membership of which was to go to non-Muslims.

V. P. Menon had gone to see Sardar at Mussoorie about these terms and the latter, though he approved of them, sent a decisive message. He refused to discuss the terms with Laik Ali who, he said, would return to Hyderabad every time for discussions and then back out. The agreement must be accepted within twenty-four hours of Laik Ali's going to Hyderabad.

There was great satisfaction in New Delhi circles. The Hyderabad problem was solved. Laik Ali had become the very embodiment of reason. But, naturally, he wanted to consult his colleagues, and so had to leave for Hyderabad.

The very next day Laik Ali backed out of the agreement. He wrote to say that he had never agreed to the principle of over-riding legislation!

On May 28, Laik Ali invited me to dinner. I was surprised at the effusive reception he gave me; for, our relations had been strained for several weeks past.

His whole approach had undergone a revolutionary change. He said he had no axe to grind; he was only a peace-maker, but accession was worse than Paramountcy and he would rather die than accede.

He then gave me a summary of the discussions he had had with Lord Mountbatten. He had come to the conclusion, he said, that responsible Government should be introduced with the Hindu-Muslim ratio of 60 : 40, but he was finding it difficult to get the Muslims of Hyderabad to accept the suggestion. The Nizam, he said, had little objection to it. Kasim Razvi was a reasonable man and might agree, but some of his followers were unwilling.

I asked him about the Razakars and referred to the more recent of their depredations. Only a few days before they had looted a wealthy merchant's house, snatched away the ornaments of the women folk by force and carried away the loot in a motor lorry and a jeep. I asked him how, even if the proposed agreement went through, he was going to suppress this anti-Indian organization which had become a law unto itself. He said he did not despair of meeting the situation successfully.

It was eleven when he made an unusual appeal.

'Munshi, I want your co-operation', he said. 'I am making a great experiment. I want the bond between India and Hyderabad cemented. Give me a chance to show that Hyderabad can be a source of strength to India. I know you are very critical of me. You have come in my way more than once. This time, please help me. Please tell Sardar not to come in the way and for Heaven's sake, do not come in the way yourself'.

I was taken aback by this new attitude. All I could say

was that if Hyderabad adopted a *bona fide* policy of friendship towards India, I would help him to the best of my ability.

Laik Ali asked me what I thought of the proposals. All I could say was that New Delhi alone could be the judge of the nature of the association between India and Hyderabad. Personally I should be happy, I said, if substantial integration with India could be achieved by friendly negotiations. But the Nizam's Government must make up its mind to open a new chapter of friendship.

'Why not stop the Ittehad papers from abusing the Indian Union and its leaders? And why not release Swami Ramananda Tirtha?' I asked.

'We cannot release Swami Ramananda Tirtha. I have evidence to show that he has taken part in a violent movement', replied Laik Ali.

'You are not correct', I said. 'Swami Ramananda Tirtha has been in jail all the time; he has also given a promise to Sardar that he will not indulge in any violent movement. Anyway, releasing him would be a very friendly gesture which the whole of India would appreciate.' Laik Ali would not agree.

'What about the Communists?' I asked. 'You have lifted the ban on them. If you want to create a friendly atmosphere, why do the Razakars ally themselves with the Communists? The whole of India is perturbed over this alliance.'

'How can I keep the ban against the Communist Party when there is no such ban in the neighbouring province?' he asked.

This was the most extraordinary conversation that I had ever had with Laik Ali. I could not for the life of me believe that he would agree to a 60 : 40 Hindu-Muslim ratio, responsible government and a constituent assembly; and even if he did, would Moin Nawaz Jung and Razvi likely to allow him to do so?

The Nizam was cautious. He sent for Sir Walter Monckton from England and in his reply to Lord Mountbatten declined to commit himself to the terms of the agreement. Nevertheless, he hastened to declare he would not replace Laik Ali.

Sir Walter arrived in India on June 3 and came to New Delhi with Laik Ali. Once again, the magician was on

the stage. The agreement, which Laik Ali had all but entered into a week back, vanished and a rival draft deftly produced. However it was turned down unceremoniously by V. P. Menon.

Negotiations began afresh. Every day Sir Walter produced a new draft. Panditji now had no confidence in Laik Ali and would not see him. Sardar instructed Menon not to make any counter-suggestions and, on June 7, 1948, wrote to Lord Mountbatten a letter clarifying his position:

After careful consideration of the course which our relationship with Hyderabad has followed since the 15th August, I am convinced that the presentation of any formula now would be a grave mistake. It would merely provide the delegation with material of which they can make publicity and other use without in any way committing themselves to any particular course of action in respect of it. Apart from this, I am satisfied that, having regard to the deterioration which has set in and the feeling in the country in regard to the many incidents which are being perpetrated, the latest of which are the attack on a village in our territory and interference with the Barsi Light Railways, the only course we can adopt now is to break off these negotiations and to tell the Hyderabad Delegation that the only solution which would be acceptable to us is unqualified acceptance of accession to the Indian Dominion in regard to the three subjects and introduction of undiluted responsible government with a provision for a satisfactory interim arrangement anticipating and facilitating such introduction.

He also wrote to Lord Mountbatten and Panditji that accession and responsible government should be insisted upon, and the delay was placing Government of India in the wrong, politically as well as militarily.

Sir Walter threatened as before to withdraw if his advice was not accepted.

As a result of long discussions, draft agreement and the *Firman* were settled on June 23. They embodied the following terms:—

- (1) The Union Parliament was to have the power to pass overriding legislation in respect of the three Central subjects.
- (2) The Razakars were to be banned.
- (3) The strength of the Hyderabad Army, subject to the State Forces' Scheme of 1939, was not to exceed twenty thousand.

- (4) The Nizam's Government was to be permitted to build up commercial, fiscal and economical relations with foreign countries, working under the supervision of the diplomatic representative of India.
- (5) An interim Government with at least 50% Muslim-non-Muslims was to be formed immediately.
- (6) The Constituent Assembly, with a 60 : 40 non-Muslim-Muslim ratio was to be summoned for January 1, 1949.
- (7) A cabinet responsible to the Constituent Assembly was to be set up with the communal ratio of 60 : 40 as soon as that Assembly met.
- (8) The Constituent Assembly so set up was to frame a constitution for the State with cultural and religious safeguards for Muslims for ten years.
- (9) The communal proportion of the public services was to be altered to the 60 : 40 formula by January 1, 1954.
- (10) The question of accession was to be left to a plebiscite.
- (11) The Union would have the power to station troops in Hyderabad in case of emergency.

Laik Ali with his infinite capacity for appearing to agree to anything so long he was left free to repudiate it, accepted these terms as well. How on earth could anyone believe that they would be accepted by the Ittehad rulers, was more than I could understand.

On the 10th, Laik Ali and Sir Walter Monckton returned to Hyderabad to secure the Nizam's consent to the terms. The expected happened.

The Nizam would not agree to any conditions relating to the composition of the Constituent Assembly or the interim Government; nor would he agree to concede any overriding legislative power to the Union in respect of the three Central subjects.

On June 12, Sir Walter was back again in New Delhi suggesting fresh terms.

On June 13, Lord Mountbatten, accompanied by Panditji and Menon, went to Dehra Dun where Sardar was convalescing. Sardar, after fully discussing the matter, agreed to

certain steps that were proposed, which, it was hoped, would inevitably lead to other results.

On June 13, Monckton asked the remaining members of the Delegation who were at Hyderabad to return to New Delhi with plenipotentiary powers in order finally to settle the outstanding points. The delegation arrived. More discussions followed.

The Nizam wanted the following points to be conceded—

1. The composition of the Constituent Assembly and the interim Government were to be left to him.

2. The strength of the Hyderabad army was to be raised by eight thousand more troops.

3. The Razakars were not to be disbanded immediately, but within three months.

4. The Government of India was only to assume power to station troops in Hyderabad if a grave emergency was declared under Section 102 of the Government of India Act of 1935, i.e. when the public tranquillity of India as a whole was threatened, but not otherwise.

New Delhi was obliging enough to accommodate the Nizam. In the result, the three Central subjects, vital to India's unity and stability, were to be left to his mercy. The Hindus of the State also lost the game; they had been at the mercy of the Nizam for centuries, and so they remained.

The armed forces of Hyderabad were to be raised to 28 thousand. The Government of India was also to provide the arms and ammunition with which they were to be equipped and, after three months, and then only, the Nizam would be good enough to disband the Razakars!

The Nizam had already declared that he would not change his Prime Minister, so that the constitution both of the interim government and the Constituent Assembly depended upon the will of the Ittehad masters of Hyderabad.

Laik Ali, however, was keen on the economic and fiscal independence of Hyderabad. That was his fixed idea and he pressed for it. Lord Mountbatten conceded that it might be incorporated in a letter from Panditji to Laik Ali, but the former could not agree to this as the Finance Minister of India was abroad. So the point in dispute remained outstanding.

These terms were also embodied in a draft agreement and *firman* to be issued by the Nizam. Every participant in the

discussion stressed the point that there was no further scope left for negotiations. Lord Mountbatten made it explicit to Laik Ali that the Nizam must either totally accept or reject the drafts.

When I learnt of the terms which had been tentatively arrived at in New Delhi, I was far from happy. While the Standstill Agreement had been torn to bits and the tardy and futile negotiations had been dragging on, regardless of the havoc that was being worked by the Communists and the Ittehadis. I had waited with endless torture and impatience. The present agreement was so enveloped in uncertainty that many more months of discussion would be required before anyone could agree to the same thing in the same sense.

Meanwhile there was going to be no change of heart and no change in the masters who controlled Hyderabad. It was clear to me that the Ittehad was merely biding its time and was never going to implement this new agreement. The only result would be that our cause would suffer and the position of the Ittehad would have a firmer basis. And the people of Hyderabad would continue to pay an increasingly heavy price and the 'cancer in the belly of India', as Sardar put it, would continue to grow.

The integrity of India was in the balance.

CHAPTER XXV

LORD MOUNTBATTEN LEAVES INDIA

THE next day, my belief in the unreliability of the Nizam and his advisers was vindicated.

Laik Ali left for Hyderabad with a promise that at 7-30 P.M. on the 15th, he would communicate the happy news of the Nizam's approval of the settlement.

At the appointed time, all who were concerned in New Delhi sat with telephone glued to their ears. I did so in Bolaram. The 7-30 P.M.—the crucial minute—came and was gone. Then came the Nizam's message: 'I must have more time; I must take the advice of my Council.'

On the 16th evening, the Nizam sent a telegram to Lord Mountbatten. He would not accept the proposed settlement, and raised the following additional four points:

(i) Words giving the Nizam the discretion to decide the basis of the Constituency had been omitted from the final draft *firman* without Laik Ali's knowledge and consent.

(ii) The phrases indicating that the Interim Government would be formed in consultation with the leaders of the various political parties had been similarly inserted in the draft *firman*.

(iii) Hyderabad's commercial, economic and fiscal independence must be guaranteed in express terms.

(iv) There must be provision for arbitration with regard to any dispute under the Agreement.

New Delhi had already given in on the point of the non-Muslim-Muslim ratio of 60 : 40 in the Constituent Assembly. In the Government that was to follow and the public services, even the semblance of an assurance giving the Hindus some reasonable representation was unacceptable to the Nizam.

The Nizam, by a lapse which can only be called miraculous, was made to challenge, and did in fact challenge, the integrity of Lord Mountbatten and Monckton; for Laik Ali contended that the two changes in the draft *firman* referred to in the first two points had been made without his knowledge and consent. He had only discovered these omissions and insertions, he said, after he had left New Delhi for

Hyderabad. This evoked a strongly-worded message from Lord Mountbatten. Sir Walter Monckton wired to Lord Mountbatten—'Lost'. Who did? I asked myself. Certainly not the people of Hyderabad, nor India.

Sir Walter saw the Nizam and Laik Ali on the 19th June with a note of Lord Mountbatten giving replies to the points raised. The changes suggested by the Nizam were too insignificant to be worth the risk of a breakdown. With regard to the commercial, economic and fiscal independence, the Government of India would certainly consider Hyderabad's request sympathetically. The arbitration clause was already there in the Standstill Agreement and surely arbitration could not be a satisfactory alternative to mutual goodwill.

Not all the persuasiveness of Sir Walter Monckton could bring about any change in the attitude of the Nizam, or rather of the Ittehad. By securing fiscal independence, the Ittehad leaders wanted to further economic integration with Pakistan. By means of the arbitration clause, they hoped for a lever by which to block any strong action on the part of the Union, and to invoke the intervention of the U.N.O. or the International Court. In fact they wanted independence and they did not care by what process of wishful thinking New Delhi satisfied itself that Hyderabad was in some way associated with the Union.

The Nizam saw that he had gone rather too far in attributing double-dealing to the highly placed participants in the negotiations, and withdrew the charge. But he stuck to the four points he had made, and added a fifth: India was not to station troops in Hyderabad, even if a state of all-India emergency was declared!

Panditji held a press conference on June 17 and the story of the negotiations (including the drafts) was placed before the public. India, he said, would not entertain any further negotiations. The settlement, as approved, was to be the last word in the negotiations.

On June 19, Sir Walter Monckton finally left Delhi, perhaps broken-hearted.

I received a report of how he parted from the Nizam. Even if it were not true, it was characteristic of them both.

'I hope you will return soon', said the Nizam when Sir Walter bade good-bye.

'I hope you will still be the Nizam of Hyderabad when next I come', replied Sir Walter.

Never had any client a more competent adviser than Monckton, and never was any adviser so recklessly flouted as he was and to such complete undoing of the client himself.

I was glad that Sir Walter was out of the Hyderabad affair. He could not stop the mad career of the Ittehad; he could only give it a protective cover, which prevented its meeting its fate. But our contact had added personal regard to my old admiration for him.

Before leaving India, Lord Mountbatten sent a long telegram to the Nizam pressing upon him not to allow the interests of the State to be sacrificed at the behest of the Ittehad clique. Lord Mountbatten still thought that the Nizam could assert himself against the Ittehad leaders. He did not know that he had thrown away his last chance of breaking their power.

Why was Laik Ali so anxious to come to terms? Why did he agree to the terms on the 14th and then resile from that position? This has been a riddle which I have tried to solve in consultation with several persons intimately connected with the events of the day, including Zaheer Ahmed, Laik Ali's Secretary, who was with him at Delhi.

There was a rumour that it was done at the instance of Jinnah. The other explanation was that on the night of the 14th, before he left New Delhi, Laik Ali who was very devout, received what he believed to be a mandate from Above.

Perhaps a more correct view is that the negotiations, and Laik Ali's acceptance of draft agreements from time to time, were a device to kill time till Lord Mountbatten left India. For, if they broke with him, a break with Sir Walter Monckton would follow, and the Ittehad did not want to convert either of them into enemies.

Anyway, India had narrowly escaped disaster and I thanked God for His mercy.

On June 19, I paid my farewell visit to Lord Mountbatten. He was very nice to me.

I told him what I genuinely felt about his services to the country. From the Indian point of view, he had been the best friend India had in the long history of British rule. But for him, the transfer of power would never have been so smooth

and Indo-British relations would not have been established on such a friendly footing.

He too was very frank. He told me the story of his negotiations with Laik Ali.

'Munshi, I had many jolts in my life. But never have I received such a shock as was given me by these people of Hyderabad,' he said.

This gave me my chance. 'Your Excellency, last March, sitting at that table I told you that the Nizam's Government did not mean business. I am glad you have come to the same conclusion.'

I could not help reflecting once again, that a little more sternness on his part, and a little less of reliance on Sir Walter Monckton's advocacy, would have brought accession in March.

Thus we parted.

Lord Mountbatten left the shores of India on June 21.

On the eve of his departure he sent his final message to the Nizam. The concluding warning ran as follows:

10. You and I know full well that a Ruler in your position cannot escape ultimate personal responsibility for making the final decision. This is now for you and you alone to make. You will go down in history either as the man who threw away an offer which, speaking quite impartially, I consider eminently fair to Hyderabad and thereby incur the universal condemnation of thinking men, or as the peace-maker of South India and as the saviour of your State, your dynasty and your people. In the latter case you will also earn the real friendship and gratitude of India.

11. This is the last advice and help I can give you and I am your sincere friend.

Mountbatten
Governor-General of India.

The reply ran:

I just received Your Excellency's telegram of the 18th June for which I thank you. I am afraid I and my Government are unable to change the decision which is already known to you since Sir Walter Monckton must have conveyed to you in addition to my message yesterday in this regard. Wishing Your Excellencies Godspeed and safe return to England.

Nizam.

On June 19, at a conference held at the Secretariat level, at which I was present, the whole situation was review-

ed and it was decided to stiffen the economic blockade of Hyderabad.

Since the dinner on the night of the 28th of May, all my contacts with Laik Ali had stopped. Within a few days of Lord Mountbatten's departure, however, Zaheer Ahmed, the Secretary of the External Affairs of Hyderabad, came to see me.

'I have come to you because I have faith in you,' he began. 'I have always told these people that you are the only man through whom settlement could be made, but they would not listen to me.'

'Zaheer,' I said, 'you know, and I know, that you have lost the best chance of perpetuating Ittehad rule in Hyderabad when you rejected the settlement you had come to with Lord Mountbatten.'

'Please help us,' he said. 'There are only four points now on which there is a difference of opinion. You alone can settle them.'

I was somewhat frank. 'You know my views. I was against the terms on which a settlement was going to be made. If my Government had made it, I should naturally have accepted it. But all the time I knew that you would never have carried it out, and that we should have less sanction to enforce it than what we have had under the Standstill Agreement. You can rely on me only if you are prepared to accede to the Union for the three Central subjects unreservedly.'

Next day, I heard Sardar's voice over the phone, vibrating with good cheer. 'Well, Munshi! How are you? Is everything all right? What about your Nizam?'

'Oh, he is all right,' I said.

Then I told him about Zaheer's suggestion.

'Settlement!'—as if he had never heard of any such thing. 'What settlement?'

His jocular queries were a sure sign of his mood. He now felt himself the master of the game.

'The Mountbatten Settlement,' I said.

'Tell him that the Settlement has gone to England,' he replied caustically and laughed.

Though the ruling circles in Hyderabad were talking big about martyrdom and defiance, rapid demoralization immediately set in. The treatment of the Lingayats in the Bidar district had made that community furious. Malikarjunappa, their representative in the ministry, contacted me. He had received a mandate from the community to leave the ministry.

The Commerce Minister, Joshi, could sense danger miles away. The day the Mountbatten negotiations had fallen through, he had wired to Sardar asking for an interview. Sardar's hammer came down on him mercilessly.

Joshi met me on the 30th. 'Sardar would not give me an interview. Look at this telegram,' he said. 'My inner-voice prompts me to sever my connection with the Nizam's Government. I want to see Sardar with a view to telling him that I am going to resign. Please arrange for an interview for me.'

'Why do you want to see Sardar?' I asked. 'You are Razvi's man. Even when I merely gave you a hint that you were in bad company, you went and complained to Laik Ali that I wanted you to resign. And you stuck to your job! Why should I help you?'

'Please write to Sardar and ask him to give me an interview.'

'Why should I?', I replied. 'You have been Razvi's partner in all the horrors which have been committed against the people of Hyderabad. I only arrange interviews with Sardar when a public cause demands it.'

Joshi was completely deflated. 'I have decided to send in my resignation.'

'I don't believe it,' I said.

'Oh, I am going to resign today. I shall come back. Please communicate with Sardar about it.'

At 9-30 P.M. Joshi returned and showed me his draft resignation. He said he was going to Jalna, the place where his factory was, and would submit his resignation on his return.

On July 21 he came back. He had wound up his affairs, transferred his monies to Bombay and was now ready for the plunge. But he said that his life was in danger, that he might be murdered, that his resignation might be suppressed. Would I please keep a copy of the resignation and all the evidence which he had collected about the atrocities in Parbhani

and other places? And would I please make use of them if anything happened to him?

The resignation was an interesting document. 'I am loyal to Hyderabad and my beloved ruler,' he had written. 'That is why I am taking this step. I accepted office only to secure communal peace. Naturally, therefore, I want to devote my time and energy even at the cost of my life to secure peace. My place is amongst the masses.'

'War, seems to be on the lips of every Muslim brother' the resignation continued, 'wherever I have gone in these districts, I have come across sad and pitiable Hindu faces, who came to me with pitiable tales either of loss of their lives, property or fear of their lives. Rape and rapine seem to have become common.'

Laik Ali was furious when Joshi submitted his resignation. He knew that the ship was sinking. He did his best to keep the knowledge of it from the public, but needless to say the Delhi Radio announced it to the world that same day.

On July 4, the Nizam wrote a letter to Mr. Atlee, then the British Prime Minister, asking his Government and the governments of the people in the British Commonwealth to intervene and find a way out of his difficulties. At the same time, Panditji also wrote strongly about the attitude of the Nizam to the British Prime Minister, who replied to the Nizam regretting his inability to accede to his request. The Labour Government throughout had played and were playing a very honourable part in the matter of India.

Now the veil over the preparations for a military conflict which were being made in Hyderabad, was drawn aside. The city bore the appearance of a war camp. Gun running from Goa by land and from Karachi by air was being accelerated. The planes flew to and from Karachi bringing in small arms. New sten-guns and lavishly supplied ammunition were now in evidence. At considerable risk brave Narayanarao, the President of the Arya Samaj, and his lieutenants, collected information about these planes and the stations to which the goods they carried were being consigned.

The construction of the Begumpet aerodrome, which was to link Hyderabad with the world, was proceeding rapidly. During those days, Hyderabad's money flowed unstintedly. Lakhs of rupees had been sent to various parties in London

and Pakistan and sterling to the extent of about one and a half million was transferred to the Pakistan High Commissioner in London. Laik Ali controlled a huge discretionary grant, which not only financed the Razakar activities, but helped many people to make foreign tours in order to secure international help. Someone flew to Egypt, someone else to Iraq.

Desmond Young, an ex-editor of the *Pioneer* and once the public relations officer of the Indian Government, went to the U.S.A. with unlimited funds at his disposal to plead the cause of Hyderabad. As a result a sudden barrage of propaganda against India flooded the correspondence columns of the American Press. The assistance of various publicity firms and prominent Americans was also sought to bring the Indo-Hyderabad dispute before the Security Council.

Zain Yar Jung, the Agent-General at Delhi, who had worked hard to bring about a settlement, was now openly declared a *gaddar*, a traitor, by the Ittehad. This meant his liquidation. With his sweet smile and genuine horror of the Razakars, he had tried to discredit my reports of their doings; now he was going to have first-hand knowledge of them!

A deputation of some leading non-Ittehadi Muslims waited on Laik Ali, urging upon him that the Nizam should be advised to accede to the Indian Union. To the fears they expressed that there might be military action, Laik Ali was reported to have said 'If the Union Government takes any action against Hyderabad, 100,000 men are ready to join our army. We also have a hundred bombers in South Arabia ready to bomb Bombay.'

The Peacock Airborne Division was still 'in the air.'

CHAPTER XXVI

DEMORALISATION

THINGS were coming to a head. After the negotiations had been broken off, Panditji was thoroughly disgusted with Laik Ali and his group. Sardar was now back in Delhi and in good health. At the inauguration of the Patiala and East Punjab States Union, he said:

Many have asked me the question: What is going to happen in Hyderabad? They forget that when I spoke at Junagadh I said openly that if Hyderabad did not behave properly it would go the way of Junagadh. These words still stand and I stand by these words.

This unequivocal declaration created a new atmosphere in the country and a great stir in Hyderabad.

The shadow of a military conflict was over Hyderabad and naturally General El Edroos, the Commander of the Hyderabad Armed Forces, began to come into the picture.

Six-foot tall and broad-shouldered, El Edroos was a remarkable personality. In a drawing-room, he looked every inch a soldier. His manners were charming. He was socially popular, and he and his wife often met me at functions at the *Dakshina Sadan* and were very nice to me.

In the beginning, he had been friendly with the Ittehad and Laik Ali appeared to have complete confidence in him. His notions of military action were derived from wishes. In the hope that negotiations would ultimately succeed, he was pampering the Ittehad. His opinion, which was generally circulated in Hyderabad and accepted by the Ittehad circle, was that the Indian Army was a *bania* army and Hyderabad could resist it for at least six months. Now that there was the possibility of a military conflict, however, his confidence was shaken.

If the reports furnished to me were true, Laik Ali suspected him of disloyalty. I was given to understand that it was only under the advice of some military expert from Pakistan that Laik Ali did not replace him at this critical juncture.

Now that the armed forces of India and Hyderabad were facing each other on the border, El Edroos woke up to the responsibility of maintaining the morale of his troops which had been undermined by the irresponsible conduct of the Razakars.

The Razakars were intoxicated with a sense of their invincibility. At various places on the border, they provoked conflicts with the Indian troops. When they were worsted, as they were in every case, they took vicarious revenge on the Hindu population of the neighbouring villages.

In the border districts, the Razakars were a law unto themselves. They often entered railway stations, and after dragging the passengers out of the trains, searched and robbed them. They commandeered stores from private individuals and demanded food and money at the point of the bayonet. No non-Muslim woman could venture into the streets without being molested by them.

At the beginning of May, the vagaries of the Razakars caused me a few hours of personal anxiety. My son, Jagdish, and his wife, who had spent their holiday with me, were on their way from Bangalore to Bombay, when, at Gangapur, the last station in Hyderabad territory, some one pulled the alarm chain. The train stopped and was attacked by Razakars. Several passengers were belaboured and looted; eleven were seriously injured; two were killed and thirteen were missing, among whom were four women and two children. With great difficulty, the engine driver pulled the train out of the station.

When I heard of the attack on the train, my heart missed a beat. If they had recognised Jagdish, I had little doubt that the sins of the father would have been visited on the son. Luckily, they failed to do so. When the train reached Sholapur station, the military officer who was in charge of it, was good enough to send me a telegram saying that my son and his wife had arrived safely in the Union territory.

Apart from the general demoralisation which such activities brought in their wake, El Edroos was very unhappy at the way in which the Razakars interfered with his military arrangements. The enclave of Barsi in the Sholapur district of Bombay was surrounded on all sides by Hyderabad territory. In order to reach this enclave the Indian armed forces and the

police had to pass through the Hyderabad village of Nanaj. As a matter of routine they did this every other day.

On July 24, a large number of Razakars and some Pathans, who had recently been employed to support them, cleared Nanaj of the villagers with the assistance of the local police and laid an ambush in a fort-like house. When a party of Indian troops was moving from Sholapur to Barsi on normal petrol duty, they were fired upon by the Razakars and Pathans from this house. Six men were killed and six wounded. The army immediately deployed, captured the village after a bitter fight, and occupied it.

The military authorities of the Union and Hyderabad appointed a committee consisting of Brigadier Singh of the Indian Army and Lt.-Col. Weston of the Hyderabad Army to make a joint enquiry. The report put the blame for the incident on the Razakars.

Kasim Razvi was very much annoyed with Lt.-Col. Weston for signing the Nanaj report and wanted General El Edroos to suspend him. This the Commander refused to do. Enraged, Razvi sent an order to a company of the armed forces at Osmanabad to re-capture Nanaj. El Edroos instructed the commanding officer not to obey Razvi's order. This created a serious rift between Razvi and the Commander-in-Chief.

On July 27, about 200 Razakars made ready to attack a village in Indian territory. A column of Indian troops was moved in to protect the village and was fired upon from across the border. The column commander rounded up the armed hostiles.

I realised the extent of the rift only when Colonel Graham, a great friend of General El Edroos, whom I had met before, came to see me. He was in charge of the Civic Guards. He was not prepared to stay in Hyderabad any longer, he said, unless Razvi's activities were stopped, and an Arms Act introduced, banning the carrying of arms without license. As this was not possible, he was leaving for England.

Colonel Graham was a charming man. He had fought in Italy during World War II, and while doing so, he had captured some prominent Italian whose splendid revolver he had kept with himself as a precious memento. He brought the revolver to me.

"If I take it with me to Bombay, it may be forfeited" he

said. "Will you please accept this as from me? If ever we meet again, I shall be glad if you will return it to me." I promised to do so.

When Col. Graham left for England, however, I asked the Government of Bombay to receive him and see that he was allowed to embark without any harassment. Not only did they receive him at Bombay, but, as a parting piece of courtesy from me, they handed him back the revolver which he prized so much.

The Nanaj incident had irritated General El Edroos beyond measure. As Commander-in-Chief he found it intolerable that Razvi should meddle with his officers. He therefore went to the Nizam and insisted that the Razakars should either be eliminated or placed under his control. He also requested Laik Ali to hand over to him all the arms which were being smuggled in by the Sydney Cotton Planes. The Nizam could not, and Laik Ali would not, comply with these demands.

About the beginning of August, Rev. W. Le Cato Edwards, Head of the Diocese of Medak, Church of South India, came to me with complaints about the situation prevailing in his diocese. I felt that in view of the propaganda carried on by the Nizam's Government, a statement of facts by the head of a Christian Mission, entirely neutral in the dispute, would help in placing India's case before responsible public opinion in foreign countries.

At my suggestion Rev. Mr. Edwards forwarded me a letter, dated August 5, 1948, addressed to the headquarters of the three Missionary Societies, two of England and one of Australia, which he represented.

In the letter the conditions in the Diocese of Medak were summarised under three heads: *The General State of Lawlessness, Open Conflict and Established Rebellion*. After setting out certain instances, Rev. Mr. Edwards wrote:—

It was distressing the other morning to visit a village on the outside near the City and to find it mostly deserted as a result of looting by a band of Razakars the previous night, the attack being accompanied by serious bodily injuries.

Nevertheless the Christians are being subject to pressure through attempts at bribery and threats. In the Panigiri area they are being pressed by Communists, in another area by a State Congress group, in yet another by a Depressed Classes

organisation, and in another—in fact in many areas—by Razakars. Sometimes they are compelled to join a particular group for safety's sake. It is becoming more and more difficult for them to maintain a neutral attitude.

A great many innocent and peace-loving villagers are suffering from attacks from all sides. Pressure is brought to bear on them by the party immediately in control, and this is followed by murderous attacks by the opposing party. The villager finds himself between two or more fires, and there are many distressing cases of punitive measures resulting in wholesale robbery, the partial and complete burning of villages and indiscriminate shooting without enquiry. Our senior workers in those areas can quote instances of Christians being involved in all the tragedies, and can vouch for the innocence of many of these simple village folk.

Appeals have been made against the shooting of un-armed villagers on mere suspicion, and the indiscriminate burning of villages, but they have been of little avail.

Writing under the heading *Established Rebellion*, Rev. Mr. Edwards wrote:

This situation we have found chiefly in the Nalgonda district where, in many areas, the Communists seem to be completely in control. This state of affairs has been preceded by a period of open warfare, in which a greater number of people have lost their goods, their houses and their lives.

To our knowledge this situation has been further aggravated recently by the Police. A police lorry patrolling the road north of Panigiri saw six people walking along the road and without any questioning they were shot down and their bodies burnt on the roadside. The bodies were later found by the Communists who buried them in graves near the road, on each of which they placed a red flag. As a result of these happenings all the villagers have become very incensed and there is a tendency for them to avow allegiance to the Communists. The main road has been cut up for several miles and trees thrown across it. Thus the loyalty of the people to the Government is being alienated. Periodic raids by the Police for plunder and the burning of houses and villages tends to consolidate this state of rebellion.

There are other areas in the country where the Razakars are practically in control. Their usual practice is to extort payments from villagers, ostensibly for their 'protection'. If anyone evades the levy, their houses are looted or burnt. As far as we have noted, there have been systematic attacks on rich people and on the western side of the Medak district these Razakars have enlisted numbers of the Depressed Classes. Nightly escapades of organised looting, burning and killing have been reported.

I forwarded one copy of this letter to the States Ministry and also the original for being forwarded to the High Commissioner for the United Kingdom in India.

The Prince of Berar, the eldest son of the Nizam, was the *de jure* Commander-in-Chief of the Nizam's army. Though generally indifferent and ineffective, he was now galvanised into sudden activity and began to attend the military headquarters, a thing he had never been known to do before. On August 3, he called upon General El Edroos to supply him with a copy of the military plans as he wanted to know something about the military situation of Hyderabad.

General El Edroos was taken aback. He promised to submit the plans to the Prince in due course and went to Laik Ali for instructions. He was told not to give the plans to the Prince.

The Prince thereupon wrote an angry letter to Laik Ali protesting against what he characterised as a gross act of military indiscipline. He wrote that if General El Edroos did not obey his orders, either his subordinate should go or he would go himself.

On coming to know of this ultimatum, General El Edroos, on the 4th, submitted his resignation directly to the Prime Minister. The Prince sent another strong protest. The General had no business to go over his head and approach the Prime Minister directly. The resignation should have been submitted through him. The General thereupon sent the resignation through the Prince of Berar, but Laik Ali sent word to the Prince that General El Edroos was indispensable.

The Nizam now sent a message to the Prince of Berar that he should not interfere in military matters, whereupon the Prince submitted *his* resignation. Laik Ali had consultations with the Nizam and had the whole thing suppressed.

At night the All-India Radio came out with the startling news of the resignation! This not only infuriated Laik Ali but spread demoralisation throughout Hyderabad.

Early in August, Prince Muazam Jah, the younger and favourite son of the Nizam, wrote to his father charging him with leading Hyderabad to destruction. He asked for five crores of rupees which his father had promised him, so that

he could leave Hyderabad and stay safely in the Union. The terms of his letter were rather pathetic:

Monckton was our friend, and he left you in disgust. Lord Mountbatten was Hyderabad's best friend; you drove him into hostility. Mr. Munshi came here as a friend; I know him since the days of Sir Akbar Hydari. He would have been of great use, but you have turned him into an enemy. I know Pandit Jawaharlal also very well, and you also made him an enemy. If you make peace with the Indian Union, the people of Hyderabad will be happy... Hyderabad will be saved and the Asafia dynasty will continue.

Pingle Venkatarama Reddy, the Deputy Prime Minister, found that he needed rest and left for Bangalore.

The great task now before the Razvi group was to prevent the Nizam from replacing the Laik Ali Ministry.

CHAPTER XXVII

CRISIS IN THE KING KOTHI

WITH Lord Mountbatten gone and Sir Walter Monckton unavailable, the Nizam began to realise the dangers of his position and made a last effort to break the prison which he had built for himself.

The first thing he did now was to have a frank talk with Hosh. In the course of a two hours' interview, Hosh advised him that he should meet me, change the ministry, accede to the Union, and, if necessary, secure military support from New Delhi for the suppression of the Razakars. The Nizam was completely unnerved by this interview.

Hosh Yar Jung kept Sir Mirza Ismail in touch with the developments. Sir Mirza advised the Nizam not to take the case to the United Nations. It was at this time that the Nizam summoned Ali Yavar Jung who had gone into political obscurity. When asked to go to the U.N.O. to support the Nizam's case, Ali Yavar declined to do so. With complete autocracy in Hyderabad and the way in which the Razakars were allowed to behave, he said, he could not face the Security Council.

About this time, I received a message purporting to be from Ali Yavar Jung. He had had talks with the Nizam, who wanted to make a change in the ministry and was anxious to know whether the Government of India would make a statement that they were not prepared to deal with the present ministry. I conveyed to him that it had already been made clear by Panditji that the Government of India would not deal with the Laik Ali Ministry.

As the prospects of an armed conflict were coming nearer, seven brave Muslims, most of them being pensioners, published a statement condemning the activities of the Razakars and favouring accession to India. 'The statement created a storm; many criticised it and some even questioned its motive. One son stole a march on others by publishing the discovery that his father—one of the signatories—was a Mir Jafar,' writes Ali Yavar in *Hyderabad in Retrospect*.

Laik Ali and the Ittehad both took a very serious view of this defiance. The Government recommended that the pension of some of the signatories should be stopped. The Nizam urged forgiveness and the Ittehad suspected that the statement was issued with his blessings.

This suspicion became very strong when, with the acquiescence of Laik Ali, the Nizam invited Sir Mirza Ismail to help. Sir Mirza visited Delhi, where he was the guest of Shri Rajagopalachari, then Governor-General of India. He soon discovered that opinion against Hyderabad had hardened in New Delhi. All the threads of negotiations were now in the hands of Sardar, and there was no question of any negotiation on the basis of the Mountbatten drafts.

Sensing the danger of the situation, Sir Mirza, the friend of the Nizam that he was, advised him to sign the Mountbatten drafts even without consulting his ministers. If necessary, he wrote, the Indian Army should be invited to give protection to the Nizam against his Government and the Razakars.

This personal letter of Sir Mirza was brought to the Nizam by Nawab Zain Yar Jung, who was already a *gaddar* marked out for early liquidation.

On July 29, Sir Mirza Ismail again sent a telegram to the Nizam that the situation was grave and that Laik Ali should at once come to Delhi to confer with him and to bring about a settlement. Hosh was sanguine that Laik Ali would soon be dismissed from office.

Ittehad circles became anxious. They hated Hosh, Sir Mirza and Zain Yar Jung, whom they suspected of working for a settlement on the basis of the Mountbatten drafts. They also knew that New Delhi was insisting on a change in the Laik Ali Ministry and the Nizam was in accord with the idea.

The Ittehad immediately took the offensive. A storm burst over the head of the Nizam himself. *Parcham*, an Ittehad organ, charged the Nizam with trying to sabotage his Ministry. Feelings ran high. The Razakars brandished their swords. In no uncertain terms it was conveyed to Deen Yar Jung that if any assistance from the Indian Army was sought by the Nizam, there would be no Nizam left to be protected.

On August 2, while addressing the Hyderabad Legislative

Assembly, Laik Ali delivered a thundering challenge to the Indian Union:

We have weighed up every factor and come to the conclusion that in order to prevent the flow of human blood and loss of human life any step is worth taking... Hyderabad has decided to refer its case to the United Nations in the hope that that body may be able to find a peaceful solution of the deadlock.

He then made an announcement regarding the personnel of the Hyderabad Delegation to U.N., reviewed the 'four months of stress and strain,' and referred to the Government of India in the following terms:

They may coerce us. They may subject us to any ordeals. They may overrun us by their military strength. We cannot give up our stand. We shall not give up our freedom. Hyderabad has emerged from many bitter trials more hopeful, more self-reliant, more confident and hardened; morally and materially stronger and better organized, and can look forward to the future with greater optimism than ever before.

It was the Ittehad lion roaring, not against the Indian Union but against the Nizam. The Nizam's radio called both Sir Mirza and Zain Yar Jung traitors, and the Council of the Ittehad passed a strongly-worded resolution condemning them both.

The Nizam's radio was also prompt in its repudiation of Sir Mirza's intervention. It said that there was no truth in the report that Sir Mirza had gone to Delhi at the instance of the Nizam; Laik Ali would not proceed to Delhi unless he was assured of a settlement on honourable terms.

When the Nizam heard of the speech Laik Ali had delivered and the attack on Sir Mirza, he worked himself up to a pitch of fury against his Prime Minister. He discussed with Hosh the formation of a new Ministry. He addressed two letters to Sir Mirza, one official and the other personal, in one of which he asked him to come to Hyderabad.

Sir Mirza asked my advice on the phone. I told him that the Nizam was considering a change in the ministry and that he should come. In the evening, however, Hosh informed me that Mirza was not coming to Hyderabad as he had warned him that if he came his life would be in danger.

Ittehad circles were now seized with mortal fright, for they suspected that the Nizam had made up his mind to sign

the Mountbatten drafts and to dismiss the Laik Ali Ministry. Plans for opposing this move were discussed and there was talk of setting up a parallel Government at Bidar. Demoralisation was complete.

On the 4th the Nizam told Laik Ali that he had ruined him and the State. On the same evening Laik Ali submitted his resignation.

By that time the report of the resignation of General El Edroos had already spread to the ranks of the army. The officers were divided in their loyalties. Some were for supporting the Nizam even against the Razakars but the younger and recently promoted ones took a different view.

On August 5 the Nizam was highly jubilant over Laik Ali's resignation. Zain arrived from New Delhi at 3 P.M. on that day and had a long talk with the Nizam; Laik Ali, General El Edroos and Deen Yar Jung were present at the interview. Zain met me later and expressed the hope that the deliberations regarding the setting up of a new ministry would be continued the next day. Meanwhile, the Nizam had asked Laik Ali to carry on.

By the evening of the 5th complete panic had spread to the town and the Ittehad circles did not know what to do. The Nizam had sent a telegram to Sir Mirza, who was at Delhi, to await Zain's arrival.

Sir Mirza made a final effort to get the Nizam to take a decision. He conveyed definitely that he was not prepared to wait at Delhi any longer unless the Nizam sent a wire to Rajaji, then Governor-General of India, saying that he had signed the Mountbatten drafts. There was no possibility of any more higgling.

At 10-30 P.M. on the night of the 5th, Laik Ali and Razvi sought an interview with the Nizam. Ala Hazrat went under.

On the morning of the 6th the Nizam was a different man. 'Whatever happens', he shouted. 'I shall never sign the Mountbatten drafts'.

The crisis was over. Laik Ali had come out victorious. It had perhaps been conveyed to the Nizam, of course with ceremonial politeness, that in view of the attitude of the military, the police and the Ittehad, they could not take the responsibility for his safety, if he signed the Mountbatten drafts.

The Nizam had no one to turn to for independent advice nor had he left any one to implement his wishes.

Razvi also issued a public warning: "If any hands are raised against the State, they would be cut down; not only the hands, which are raised, but the hands *that controlled them.*" (*Italics are mine*).

On the 9th, Laik Ali, firm in his seat once more, invited me to dine with him at Shah Manzil. His object in so doing was to convince me that all the stories about his resignation were unfounded. He impressed on me that Sir Mirza had no business to intervene in Hyderabad affairs and that the Nizam was very angry with him. I knew better, and told him so.

With his charming air of injured innocence, he assured me that there were no differences between himself and the Nizam. When I referred to the Ittehad newspapers, both English, and Urdu, which had carried the news of his resignation, he said, 'Ala Hazrat had made some critical remarks about me and I was willing to resign if he had no confidence in me. The next day, however, he told me that he had not intended to express any want of confidence in me, so I did not press him to accept my resignation. Of course, I am willing to go at any moment.'

Then Laik Ali assumed one of his emotional attitudes. 'Unfortunately, I have not succeeded in making any "spiritual" contribution to the affairs of the State. But anyway, we should avoid any conflict. I want you to help me.'

I knew by experience that when Laik Ali began to ask me to help him, he had something up his sleeve.

'When you were negotiating with Lord Mountbatten, you asked me not to throw my weight against any settlement,' I replied. 'I kept my promise. I did nothing to obstruct the settlement; nor could I have done so even if I had wanted to. It was you who invited a break-down. Now my Government has no confidence in your Ministry. Unless the Nizam and his advisers do something in a big way, my Government will not repose confidence in you.'

I then pointed out to him that as long back as February, I had pressed upon him the necessity of disbanding the Razakars, but his reply had been that he wanted them as an

instrument wherewith to resist India's demands. The result was that the Ittehad had become a serious menace to the security of India.

Laik Ali repeated his usual claim that the atrocities of the Razakars were highly exaggerated.

'You cannot eliminate the Razakars by persuasion,' I said. 'They can only be liquidated by the strength of either the army or the police loyal to the Government. As it is, in my opinion, your Ministry is not in a position to do this.'

I suspected the purpose of that interview. In the morning Laik Ali had told Prince Muazam Jah that he was meeting me that night to find a way out. Having bullied the Nizam into submission, he wanted to create an impression that he was negotiating a settlement. While parting, I responded to his emotional talk by friendly advice.

'Look here, Laik Ali,' I said, 'you always say you have confidence in me. You were once my client. What do you gain by this kind of attitude? The agreement and the *Firman*, as approved by Lord Mountbatten, constituted the best settlement that you ever could hope to get; you rejected it. But remember, there are four crores of Muslims in this country. If you, as the Nizam's Prime Minister, could make it up and co-operate with the Government of India, you would solve India's Hindu-Muslim problem. You would create a new State in Hyderabad, and I should not be surprised if, a few years hence, you were welcomed by the whole of India as a great Indian statesman. Why don't you accede on the three Central subjects and have done with all this?'

'Mr. Munshi, I cannot for the life of me reconcile myself with accession to India.'

'You should know that disastrous consequences would follow if you persist in your present course.'

At that he suddenly looked up and said: 'Mr. Munshi, there is such a thing like *sahadat*, martyrdom.'

I had no answer to this, but I knew this mood of his.

On the morning of the 10th, Laik Ali pressed me to pay a courtesy *Id* visit to the Nizam, or to send him greetings. I told him that in view of his studied discourtesy to me from the day I had arrived in Hyderabad, I would not care to offer unreciprocated greetings.

To be correct, however, I telephoned immediately to Sardar and, in accordance with his instructions, conveyed to Laik Ali that I was willing to see the Nizam only if he so desired. At the same time, I would not take the responsibility of offering him any kind of greeting, either personally or by a letter, as I felt that by doing so I should be likely to be misunderstood.

CHAPTER XXVIII

DEMORALISATION IN OUR CAMP

THERE were about eight hundred employees of the Government of India in Hyderabad. Of these, about two hundred and twenty-five, who were non-Muslims and non-Hyderabadis, were now in a state of panic. A deputation of their representatives demanded that they should be evacuated from Hyderabad. They were here, they said, to serve the Government, not to die for it. The Post and Telegraph employees went one better; they asked that their offices should be closed.

Reports had been received that the Nizam's Government meant to take over the Post, Telegraph and Telephone communications at no distant date. The technical personnel were, therefore, afraid that in that eventuality they would be forced to operate the communication systems for the internal purposes of the State as against the Government of India.

In the meantime, the newly-formed committees of the Razakars that had been placed in charge of the Hindu localities were given full powers to deal with the 'enemy' in any emergency. Circulars were also issued calling upon the Razakars to wipe out all disloyal persons.

I asked the employees of the Government of India not to be nervous and assured them that I would look after them. But their fears were not to be allayed. The arrangement which I said I hoped to make was that no more than five plane-loads of staff should remain on duty in Hyderabad and at the critical moment the planes would take them out of the State.

'You will leave Hyderabad before a military conflict and we shall be left here to die,' said the representatives of the employees.

I gave them a solemn promise that I would not leave Hyderabad till every one of them had been evacuated. This satisfied them. I told Sardar about this promise and asked him to see that whatever happened, I should not be placed in a position when I could not keep my promise.

The care of these officials of the Government of India threw an anxious burden on me. In the end, my choice fell on

Meadows Barracks at Bolarum, a sort of fortified camp, which could conveniently accommodate about 300 men and I transferred my garrison engineers' office and the treasury there. The Company of the Kumaon Regiment, which formed my personal guard, was also transferred there. A few months' rations were brought from Poona and stored in the Barracks in case the occupants had to stand a siege.

It was a tragic sight to see the demoralisation that had set in my personal staff. Two of the three police officers, one from each of the surrounding provinces, who were attached to my office, came to me in tears and begged for permission to leave. Though I was thoroughly disgusted with their attitude and would have refused permission just to make them unhappy, I sent them away lest they might spread the rot among my staff.

This was a timely warning and I began to skeletonize the staff of my various offices. All its members were divided into groups, each group with a responsible head. The families of non-resident employees were sent away to their homes and superfluous staff was transferred elsewhere.

I sent my Private Secretary to Orissa, for he had little work to do in Bolarum. Major Singh took up his work, in addition to his own duties as A.D.C. but I asked him whether he also would like to leave.

'My duty is to be here with you,' replied the loyal Sikh. 'I shall be with you all the time.' After this, the office work also fell on him. He acted as my Private Secretary, A.D.C. and, later, as my Secretary as well. The remaining police officer and my three personal assistants—Krishnaswami, Rama Rao and another—decided to stay on with me.

Major Singh acquitted himself extraordinarily well in the discharge of the multiple duties which had devolved on him. He worked hard day and night, for, in addition to his other duties, he also supervised the Meadows Barracks and kept in touch with all important contacts in Hyderabad.

I was very worried on account of the members of the staff. They had served the Government of India well. Their courageous work during those days, as I wrote to the Sardar, required to be recognised in some way, if I was not present on the spot to urge their claim.

As it turned out, my apprehensions were not quite incorrect.

About this time W— an American correspondent whom I had known in New Delhi, arrived at Hyderabad. He was one of those gushing, breezy Americans who feel it to be their business to take charge of the affairs of the whole world. He was an extremely clever man, and when I had met him in Delhi, I had found that he had made a special study of the personal life of the great and was ever willing to give everyone the benefit of his study with juicy picturesqueness.

W— continued to meet me frequently, as also Laik Ali and Razvi by turns. Whenever he met me, he put his forefinger on the button of my coat, and addressing me as 'K.M.', told me to do this, that or the other. Anyway, he was an entertaining visitor, in marked contrast with other foreign correspondents, and his visits were pleasant interludes.

After August 15, I sent most of my personal papers and files to Bombay. The official papers were despatched to the States Ministry later. I also wrote letters bidding good-bye to my wife and children and sent them some diary notes under sealed cover to N. M. Buch, the Joint Secretary of the States Ministry, with instructions to hand them over to my wife in case anything happened to me.

August 15, 1948

In the morning I heard Rajaji's voice on the radio. Wrote a chapter of *Deval Devi*.

We had forgotten to invite the Nizam, Prince of Berar, Prince Muazam Jah and Basalat Jah to the Independence Day party and so I wrote personal letters, which I sent by Singh. Of course they were not going to attend. Fixed the place where the flag salutation was to take place.

From 3 o'clock guests began to arrive. At 4-25 P.M. I went down and met General and Mrs. El Edroos and others. We walked up to the flagstaff. The flag was hoisted; *Jana Gana Mana* was sung by Gyankumari and others and the salute was taken. About 500 joined us in the ceremony.

We then went into the *shamiana*. El Edroos, Mrs. Edroos, Deen Yar Jung and Ali Yavar Jung were there.

Most of the Hindu leaders had also come. Laik Ali and Moin Nawaz came a little later.

In the meantime, the report was brought that some Congressmen while coming to the party were attacked by the Razakars in the train. Two of them who had received injuries were brought into the drawing room. I went and met them. One of them was seriously wounded and was bespattered with blood. Edroos, Deen Yar Jung and Pingle Reddy also came in and saw the wounded men and made enquiries about them. W—, the American correspondent, went on taking photographs.

Naturally, the cheer had gone out of the party. Laik Ali and Moin Nawaz did not go inside the house to see the wounded, but they felt very small. Ganeriwal and several others surrounded Laik Ali and excitedly told him of the incident. I went and rescued him from the crowd.

At night I received a telephone from Chandrachud saying that the Gaekwad would like to meet me immediately. I telephoned to Sardar. As he agreed, I decided to leave for Bombay the next day.

August 16, 1948

Pannalal came and saw me. He had seen the Nizam. There was nothing new; only the usual talk. I left for Bombay at 2-30 P.M. and reached at about 5-20 P.M. on account of head winds.

I must refer at the cost of digression, to the affairs of His Highness Pratap Singh Gaekwad, then the Maharaja of Baroda State. Coming as I did from the Baroda College, I had been looked upon by his grandfather, Sayaji Rao Gaekwad, as a prize boy of his College. When Pratap Singh had got into difficulties after his marriage with Sita Devi, his second wife, he had requested me to help him in certain matters.

Good-natured, easy-going, interested only in horses and completely dominated by Sita Devi, he was going through this period, critical both for him and the country, with babylike innocence. Whatever the advice given, he would sign any letter which any of his henchmen supported by Sita Devi placed before him.

I will deal with the part that I played in the integration of Baroda, elsewhere. On this occasion, I spent the 16th and

17th in Bombay, helping the Gaekwad to straighten out his chronic difficulties with Sardar.

My notes for the 17th of August, other than those relating to the Gaekwad, run as follows:—

Spent the best part of the day in finalising the budget of the Bharatiya Vidya Bhavan.

In the evening saw Sarala (my daughter) in the hospital. Mummy is not well herself. She is a plucky girl. She knows that the situation in Hyderabad may become critical but puts on a bold face. We had nice time.

August 18, 1948

Returned to Bolarum at about 10-40 P.M. The Post and Telegraph employees were reported to be very anxious, and were going to wait upon me in a deputation. The way that the States Ministry kept me and my office in the dark about the happenings was very oppressive. Buch said he was going to Rajkot. So I rang up H. M. Patel. He told me that it would be difficult to carry out my ideas about the evacuation of these employees and stated that I should wait for the final reply till the end of this week-end.

Ganeriwal came at night. He had an interview with Laik Ali. As usual, Laik Ali had asked him to come to his rescue by producing a formula on the footing of 50 : 50 Hindu-Muslim ratio. I cannot but admire the tenacity with which he has gone on repeating the same formula for the last nine months to every Hindu.

To-night Singh told me that if we were arrested, Nanda and Iyengar, military and civil intelligence officers, would be in difficulties. They might not receive diplomatic immunity on account of the work that they had been doing. This was a serious matter and I immediately called a conference. Raju urged upon me that Major Nanda and Iyengar should be sent on leave forthwith. I had no objection to the course suggested, but I warned them of the consequences of their leaving their posts at this critical time and the effect it would have upon their future career. I told them however that if they felt like going,

I would consult their chiefs and send them out on some duty outside in a few days.

August 19, 1948

Nanda and Iyengar came to me and told me that they had thought over the matter and that they would prefer to stay. 'I was very glad' I told them; 'If you feel weak I will provide for your leaving; but, as a friend, I would like you to stick to your post, and build up a tradition for future India. We cannot take a merely personal view of such a situation.'

I then contacted Sanjeevi (the Director of Intelligence) and told him my point of view. He had however no objection to Iyengar going on duty to Bangalore. General Rajendrasinhji asked me on the telephone to give facilities to Mrs. El Edroos to go to Poona. In the course of our conversation I mentioned to him the position of Nanda. He approved of my idea of sending Nanda to Bombay if I thought proper.

Talked to Sardar on phone. Told him about the difficulties about the Post and Telegraph employees. He promised to send a reply in a day or two.

At 1 P.M. a letter was received from Moin Nawaz with an enclosure, being a letter from Laik Ali to Panditji, conveying the decision of the Nizam's Government to go to the United Nations Organisation. I immediately sent a wireless to Panditji and Sardar. The Nizam's Government has scored a diplomatic triumph, Zaheer Ahmed is going to England to file the application with the U.N.O. this evening.

Earlier, I telephoned to Durgadas. My article was well received; he says my reputation is standing high in Delhi. He told me about the Ministers of State. Rumours about the death of Jinnah are also afloat (in Delhi).

N. K. Rao and Pandit Narendraji came. I impressed upon them the necessity of removing the suspension order against some of the leading Congressmen.

Telephoned to Sir Mirza. The Nizam had written to him on the authority of Laik Ali that I had disapproved

of his action (in going to Delhi). Laik Ali is a wonderful man at telling lies.

Joshi came in the evening. He had also seen Laik Ali. The same old story: Laik Ali had told him to find a way out.

Iyengar came and told me that he had had a talk with Sanjevi.

August 20, 1948

Nanda saw me in the morning and said he had decided to stay here till the end. Even I congratulated him on his decision. I told him that if the situation became dangerous it was our duty to stick to our post.

The States Ministry does not take us into confidence, naturally because these are secret movements.

We look like a few desperate men holding on to a forlorn post. Possibly, the psychological pressure on the staff is greater on account of the tension in the city. The whole lot, however, is brave.

Met Raja of Wanaparty and Raja Mehboob Karan (the Secretary of the Prince of Berar).

W— had dinner with me. He is out on a little political venture of his own. He has become friendly with Laik Ali, El Edroos, Kasim Razvi and me. He has been induced to believe that if there is military action, the Razakars will join the Communists and their influence in the South will increase. This Communistic bogey has more or less thrown him into antagonism to us. He appealed to me to pull off a diplomatic triumph by organising a new party in Hyderabad headed by some Muslims. There was also a kind of threat in what he said: If India goes to U.N.O. for Kashmir, Hyderabad and for the Nagas in Assam, the support of the world will be withdrawn from India. He has collected some Communist papers which he proposes to send me by Major Singh.

Iyengar has decided to stay here. He is a religious-minded man. We had discussions on God, *Yoga* and various other matters.

In the afternoon sent a telegram to Rajaji at Bangalore. Also had a telephone talk with Gopalswami Iyengar

whether reference by the Nizam's Government to U.N.O. is going to make any change in our programme. He said 'no'.

About this time it was reported to me that Sir Walter Monckton had advised Laik Ali that a reference should be made to the United Nations Organisation as it would delay military action but without denouncing the Standstill Agreement. It was likely, the U.N.O. might get India to accept the modifications to the rejected Mountbatten drafts. On the other hand, if the U.N.O. rejected the appeal, then Hyderabad could accept the drafts. But if the Standstill Agreement was denounced, India might march into Hyderabad at once and present the world with a *fait accompli*.

Another view reported to me was said to be backed by Pakistan. U.N.O. would not entertain any appeal unless the Standstill Agreement was denounced and the technical question was resolved. Pakistan could then help considerably as it would be an international issue. In this way military intervention by India might be delayed and if she did take any such action, it would cost her international prestige.

Frantic efforts were also being made to send emissaries by Sydney Cotton planes to the kings of Hejaz, Trans-Jordan and Egypt.

CHAPTER XXIX

AS THE NET CLOSES

THE diary notes run:

August 21, 1948

Had a telephone talk with Sardar with reference to a telegram, presumably from Zaheer Ahmed, advising against reference to U.N.O. as well as against 'surgical operations' which must mean the denouncement of the Standstill Agreement. Sardar is against closing the Post and Telegraph offices for the present and asked me to send away those persons who felt weak, gradually.

I sent a wire to Bishop Whitekar about the alleged complaints that medical facilities were not being received by the mission. In fact, Edwards who took away (the) facility orders for bringing medicines into Hyderabad, curiously enough, did not bring them. Now Bishop Whitekar has started complaining to foreign correspondents (as if the fault was ours).

I contacted the Bishop and he wrote a nice letter of apology saying that it was due to a mistake of Edwards, not mine, that the medicines were not brought into Hyderabad.

Dhoot and a contractor whom we called MAZ met me. A relative of the contractor, Zul Qadar Jung, a Nawab and an old officer of the Nizam, wanted to see me. It seems he had a talk with the Nizam, who, according to the report, was very much perturbed, and had lost his nerve. He was playing into the hands of Laik Ali, said MAZ.

Phoned to Sardar, Satyanarayan Sinha and G. D. Birla. Everyone seems to agree that the application to U.N.O. is not going to make any difference to the programme. The rains seem to be coming in the way.

Felt a little feverish.

Ganeriwal came and discussed the possibility of starting a Muslim party. As usual, he brought stories from

the Nizam's palace. Heard that Rajaji has written a letter to the Nizam. Mudaliar has also written to Laik Ali.

Sheobullah Khan, the brave young editor of the *Imroze*, an anti-Razakar Urdu paper, criticised Razvi fearlessly and was a signatory to the statement issued by Manzur Jung and his friends. Razvi, as I mentioned, was wroth at this statement. He had given a solemn warning that 'if hands were raised in the State, they would be cut down'—those 'hands and the hands controlling them,' presumably the Nizam's.

August 22, 1948

The editor of the *Imroze*, Sheobullah, has been shot down and his hands cut off. His brother-in-law is also seriously wounded. The Ittehad are liquidating their enemies in true Fascist style.

Manzur Jung and Akbar Ali are both arrested and sent to gaol. (This report was later found to be incorrect.) This will dispose of all possible Muslim opposition to the present regime.

The Muslim editors of the anti-Ittehad Urdu papers are threatened by letters and phone messages that the fate of the editor of the *Imroze* would overtake them if they supported anti-Hyderabad propaganda. A round up of the Congressmen who are likely to oppose the decision to go to U.N.O. is also expected.

Nawab Zul Qader Jung came to lunch. MAZ, his relative, got him invited. He appears to be one of the ablest and most clear-headed men that I have met in Hyderabad. It was clear that he came to talk business on behalf of the Nizam or, perhaps, Deen Yar Jung. He wanted to know whether the Asafia Dynasty would be perpetuated and the privileged position of the Muslims maintained in Hyderabad, if it acceded. He also discussed ways and means by which the present ministry could be replaced.

August 23, 1948

A contractor came and informed me that *Dakshina Sadan* was being watched. He also told me of a meeting held in a mosque in Bolarum about the 16th where it was announced that the Razakar headquarters had offered a prize of Rs. 5,000/- to any one who would dispose of me.

Chandy, a Police Officer of Mysore State, brought a letter from His Majesty and C. R. for the Nizam. It was just a letter of pious hope. In the evening I learnt that the Nizam had sent an equally pious reply to C. R. He also sent a letter to Monckton.

The correspondent of *Picture Post* came to lunch and had discussions with me.

Pannalal came and reported that after the assassination of Sheobullah, Ali Yavar and others were not keen on working for a change in the ministry.

I was fed up with *Deval Devi*. So spent the time in dictating letters and reading newspapers.

Ganeriwal came in the evening. He had seen Deen. My surmise was correct that Zul Qadar had come to talk for Deen. Ganeriwal also went and saw Zul Qadar, who said that he was considerably impressed with my talk; that he was also seeing the Nizam. Possibly, they might establish contact with me in a day or two.

At night, thought of Mummy all the time. Slept rather late.

Past midnight, at about 2 o'clock, the sentries suspected that some people were crawling along the compound wall. Alarm was sounded. The men ran away and nothing happened. At 4 o'clock everything was quiet.

August 24, 1948

Raju and Iyengar placed before me the result of their investigations into the matter of Rs. 5,000/- prize on my head. Considered whether it was advisable to inform the States Ministry. I hesitated because I felt that it might be taken as my being in panic. Raju, however, felt that his investigation showed that the report was reliable and it would not be right to keep the States Ministry uninformed.

I was seriously perturbed about Ganeriwal butting into Zul Quadar's efforts. He belongs to the rival camp, and his attempt to contact Deen and Zul Qadar might prove very unfortunate.

Pathak's telegram thanking me for what I did for the Gaekwad. The leader in the *Free Press*, on my doing

work without taking any remuneration, is reproduced in the *Meezan*. Some people are hard to please.

Wrote *Deval Devi*. For the moment, the mood is gone.

Reports received about the atrocities at Udgir.

Raja of Wanaparty came. Laik Ali wants to send him to England as he has found a place for him in Oxford University. He formally applied to me for passport and exchange. I told him that I was not inclined to oblige Laik Ali.

Discussed with Captain Ramichand and Major Singh about the disposition of the guards. Rearrangements are being made.

Transmitted Menon's reply to Laik Ali. It is extraordinarily well drafted.

Met Prof. Quadri whom Moin Nawaz had sent to help me with the novel. We had discussions on Amir Khusrau, Deval Devi, Malik Kafur and other matters.

MAZ met me. He gave me some very important information. I told him about Ganeriwal. He also complained of G.'s intermeddling.

The report of MAZ was: Deen Yar Jung who is personally loyal to the Nizam, has his own ambition to displace Laik Ali, who appears to be taking orders from Jinnah. The final Mountbatten negotiations fell through because Jinnah did not want Laik Ali to settle with India. In connection with this an earlier incident was cited. When Laik Ali wanted the advice of Jinnah, the latter sent back a message that he would not give advice unless they were prepared to accept it implicitly. Laik Ali conveyed to him at the time that they would carry out his orders. The Nizam's immediate circles have come to feel that Laik Ali in taking orders from Jinnah, is acting against the interest of the State.

Razvi also has a grouse against Laik Ali. He does not want to accept the advice of El Edroos regarding the military activities. Some talks are going on between Deen's group and Razvi's. There is also an anti-Razvi group in the Council of the Ittehad; it is very sore and is perturbed at the assassination of Sheobullah Khan. There are distinct signs of discontent and they are expected to

be contacting the Nizam's circle. Things are expected to develop in four or five days.

Had Raja of Rampet for dinner. An Anglicised old aristocrat, he does not know what to do. He is waiting for the Union to save Hyderabad.

Had a telephone talk with Mummy. She is getting very nervous. I hope the story of the price on my head does not reach her.

Had a talk with Buch. He told me that the report about the prince on my head should be sent to the States Ministry. He assured me that there would be no misunderstanding.

August 25, 1948

Could not write *Deval Devi*. Imagination has run dry. W— came and, as usual, we had a roving discussion. Razvi has won him over. His mind is obsessed with the Communists and he thinks of pulling off a diplomatic triumph personally by inducing Razvi to break with them; by getting all able-bodied Razakars enlisted in the army; and by making the Government of India conscious of the dangers of Communism if a military conflict took place. In this way he wants to achieve an American victory over the Communist forces. He thinks it to be a great personal adventure. Laik Ali and Razvi have been very hospitable to him and played upon his vanity so that he may be their friend in America. These globe-trotting correspondents are a great world institution who exercise quite a lot of influence over men and affairs.

Prof. Hadi Hasan came to lunch; he is Habib's great friend and an extraordinarily charming man. He claims to have collected 47 lakhs of rupees single-handed for a medical college at the Aligarh University. His conversation is full of witty monologues, and he can turn out a compliment in the style of a Persian poet. He is very unhappy at the affairs in Hyderabad, of which he is fond. He wouldn't mind, he says, if he had a place here to live when India settles Hyderabad's affairs. He is a student of Persian poets; also recited portions of his Persian translation of *Shakuntala*. He is coming to lunch again on the 30th.

N. K. Rao was here. Nothing much.

August 26, 1948

S. M. Razvi and Zain Yar have come on the 24th evening summoned by Laik Ali. The object of their visit is kept a secret.

The Nizam sent a telegram to Rajaji to intervene. He has made a technique of asking people to intervene without moving an inch himself. The Nizam also filed an appeal before U.N.O., which means that for the moment nothing will be done.

Dhoot was here in the afternoon.

August 28, 1948

MAZ saw me. He reported to me Zul Qadar's conversation with Deen and Razvi, both of whom are trying to combine against Laik Ali.

It appears that S. M. Razvi came with some letters from New Delhi; that a letter of the Government of India was placed before the Cabinet and a reply was sent setting out the charges against the Government of India. S. M. Razvi also appears to have brought some important proposals, but Laik Ali told him that he should put it in writing and send it to him formally.

Eyes were bad. N. K. Rao brought a Sanskrit Pandit who read a few verses from the *Bhagvat*. Took cholera vaccine, talked to Buch. Had fever at night.

August 30, 1948

The mystery of the two phones, one from Sardar and the other from Menon, remains unexplained. It points to some significant message having been sent, presumably through Zain. There is no sign of it here.

Zul Qadar met the Nizam yesterday and had a two hours' talk. The Nizam asked him to report his conversation with me and his impressions. Zul Qadar gave the report and advised him to meet me. Nizam complained to him that I did not meet him every month as the Residents used to do. He also gave Zul Qadar the reports which Laik Ali had given him about me, all of which were garb-

led. Nizam said that it was difficult for him to invite me but if I called once or twice, things would be easier.

Zul Qadar also told the Nizam about Laik Ali acting under the directions of Pakistan. Nizam kept quiet and did not make any comments. Evidently the old man is trying to keep as many threads of intrigue in his hands as possible. Zul Qadar sent word that I should, on some pretext or the other, make an attempt to meet the Nizam. I replied that it was not possible for me to do so.

Telephoned the advice to Sardar who instructed me not to see the Nizam. If he wanted me, he should send for me, he said. I conveyed the message to Zul Qadar.

Dr. Hadi Hasan had lunch with me.

Italia came to me to explain that his reported interview in the Meezen that he was against accession, was faked by the newspaper. Shastri reported to me the speech of Razvi, which he had delivered at a secret session of the Ittehad working committee. He also gave me the details of the liaison between the Pakistan Government and the Nizam's Government. He said that Razvi was now merely an instrument of Laik Ali and that Laik Ali for the moment is an instrument of Pakistan. He also told me that Ghulam Rasool claimed that he had had direct contacts with V. P. during the different stages of the negotiations.

We held a staff dinner as Raju and Venkatavardhan are proceeding on leave tomorrow.

Had report from 'Sound Silent'. Very important.

About this time a highly placed officer in the Nizam's Army—whom we referred to as 'Sound Silent'—had been in contact with us for some time. He also saw me once or twice. At my request the officer had prepared an exhaustive report on the strength and disposition of the Hyderabad Armed Forces which, I am sure, was greatly appreciated by our military authorities.

August 31, 1948 :

Have sent a wireless to Sardar pressing for early military action, if not, at least for the complete sealing off of Hyderabad.

The Nizam's Legislative Assembly started yesterday with all the pageantry of an independent parliament.

Sohrab Modi sent a telegram inviting me to the *premiere* of a film version of my *Prithvi Vallabh*. Telephoned to him to fix up a special chartered flight for my going to Bombay on Friday.

Heard Sardar's brilliant replies in Parliament on the radio. He said early action would be taken against Hyderabad. When asked whether facilities would be given for the Hyderabad Delegates to go to U.N.O. he said 'Yes, just in the same way as we would give facilities to the Zamindars of Madras to go to U.N.O. for the Zamindari Bills.'

Sardar telephoned to me, evidently to assure himself that I had heard his answers. He told me not to go to Bombay even for two days. Things are evidently moving very fast.

Telephoned to H. M. Patel about certain goods lying at the Secunderabad Station. He is going to issue necessary orders regularising our taking delivery of these goods.

Rajaji's letter which was received by wireless was sent to the Nizam. It guarantees the position of the Nizam but demands the two points of Sir Mirza Ismail, *viz.* banning of the Razakars and the re-posting of the Indian Army at Secunderabad. Nizam will never be permitted to do so.

Completed the whole month by *dhyana* and *japa*. This time, apart from the usual effect of controlling my restlessness, the *dhyana* had had an effect both on my sleep and digestion. During the last month, recited the XIIth *adhyaya* of the *Gita*, particularly on the aspect of *shanti*.

Heard a rich 'Nizam' story which may go in with the others. The Resident used to meet him once a month. Once he gave the Resident 2 P.M. as the time for his interview. The then Prime Minister suggested that 2 P.M. is rather an awkward time, and it would be much better if 4 P.M. was fixed. 'Oh, no!' said the Nizam. 'That would involve the worry of giving him tea.'

The report is that he has given eight crores-worth of silver to the State recently, and his gold and other valuables have been taken to the Bank of England. Someone

went to him recently and referred to his wealth. 'Wealth, wealth! I am a very poor man,' he said.

September 1, 1948 :

W — came and met me. He was very sore. They would not allow him to photograph the Nizam. His nerves are shattered. All along he was being piloted to places where everything was nice. On Wednesday evening, however, he went to a village which was being looted and burnt by some army men and Razakars. He was so thoroughly upset at the sight that he is now very bitter against the Hyderabad Government. They also wanted to get rid of him from here. They found that he was too political-minded.

Douglas Brown of the *Daily Telegraph*, and Potter of the *Daily Express* came and met me. We had a two hours' talk. I explained the whole situation from our point of view. But it was clear that Brown was against India. On one or two occasions he assumed a bit of a bullying attitude. They thought that I had stopped the photographs taken by the TIME and LIFE correspondents from leaving India.

Hyderabad manages to have a first-class international propaganda.

September 2, 1948 :

Nizam is very much perturbed....

Nizam is carrying on correspondence with Sir Mirza, and Deen does not appear to be happy with Laik Ali or El Edroos.

Received a letter from Sripat Rao, President of the Legislative Assembly, inviting me to the opening Address of the Legislative Assembly and an At Home thereafter. I decided not to go.

The monotony of writing *Deval Devi* has spoiled the even tenor of the story. The whole thing will have to be re-written. After I finish *Deval Devi* I shall re-write it at one stretch in one week. As I told Mummy, I look like 'Sita in Ashok Vana,' in a beautiful garden all by myself.

Informed Sardar about developments. Talked to Buch.

Brown of the *Daily Telegraph* has sent a most vicious telegram about the situation comparing India with Nazi Germany, me with Ribbentrop and Hyderabad as the happy land of peace. He did not state the important fact that foreign correspondents are treated lavishly and are even provided with company to talk to. . . .

Raja of Wanaparty came. He wants to go to England for some time.

Had a talk with Buch. Suggested to him, as well as to Sardar, that Ramaswamy Mudaliar and Motilal Setalvad should be sent to U.N.O. for Hyderabad. B. N. Rao, he told me, had been asked not to return to India possibly because he might have to help in the Hyderabad matter.

September 3, 1948 :

Raju's telephone. Talked to Pulla Reddy. Talked to Morarji Desai about Dr. Hadi Hasan and Mrs. Edroos. I told him that courtsey required that Mrs. Edroos should be very well treated. He was not willing to allow her to come, but ultimately agreed.

I have given up *dhyana*; it was too much of a strain. I only carry on with *swadhyaya*.

Read the summary of the historical novel, *Eagle in the Sky* from Omnibook. Read Stillwell's *Diary*.

Gupta's trunks arrived. Phoned to Mummy about them. Mummy is overworking herself with Bhavan's affairs. Lata is also working hard and has fallen ill. I told Mummy to relieve her of the curator's work.

The dilapidated building in the rear of the Bhavan has now been repaired and the Pathashala boys have gone to live there. A part of the bungalow is now being used for Stree Seva Sangh. Akhaney has agreed to give a loan against debentures. Mummy has also collected some money for debentures. Hostel in the Andheri College is ready now, and will soon be occupied.

At 4 o'clock the Pandit came and started reading *Shakuntala* with me. I had first read it 47 years ago in my Previous Class and as I went on analysing the sentences,

I re-captured the first flush with which I read it in 1902. Tears were in my eyes.

Qamir Hamidi, who was released from jail, came with his uncle and garlanded me.

Claude Scott has instructed Desmond Young to carry on propaganda in England and France. Our case is going by default.

Sardar telephoned at night. Talked to Sir M. He is writing one of his strong letters to the Nizam. Nothing however will energise the...

September 4, 1948 :

Very much perturbed over the excellent international propaganda which Hyderabad is conducting.

Tired of *Deval Devi*. Read *Shakuntala*. Had a message.

September 5, 1948 :

Laik Ali's speech delivered yesterday is a declaration of independence. Though couched in polite terms there is a note of defiance throughout. Evidently, he is smarting under Sardar's comparison of the Hyderabad delegation with the Zamindars of Madras.

In the evening, sent the (Nizam's) reply to Rajaji by wireless. How wonderful! 'There is no internal insecurity in Hyderabad; border incidents are mainly created by India. Mirza does not know Hyderabad, the ungratefulness of it! 'Army will not be allowed to be posted in Hyderabad in any event. Cannot act behind the back of my Cabinet'.

Sardar's telephone. Announcement of the Kashmir Commission is expected. Decision will be taken thereafter.

Mummy left for Delhi.

September 6, 1948 :

MAZ saw me in the morning; Zul Qadar has not succeeded in his efforts. Deen is not as strong as before.

The Hyderabad Delegation for the United Nations Organisation, headed by Moin Nawaz, is leaving by Sydney Cotton plane.

After Sardar's cutting replies in Parliament, no other alternative was left to them. Cotton is here in Hyderabad for a few days. Mushtaq Ali, Hyderabad A. G. in Pakistan, is reported to be also here with some air officers of Pakistan. Claude Scott has prepared a rejoinder to our White Paper.

Ganesh Chaturthi. Went with Ramachari and Dhoot to Ganesh Utsava.

September 7, 1948 :

Panditji announced in Parliament the final demands made on the Nizam: (a) banning of the Razakars, and (b) reposting of army to Secunderabad.

I received an official letter from V. P. Menon containing the same terms as on the wireless. Sent it to Laik Ali at 3 P.M. Their legislature was adjourned. In the evening Pingle Venkataram Reddy read an official statement.

At 4 P.M. the Nizam signed a mobilisation order.

Later, another wireless from the States Ministry about the incident near Kodada. Indian Army men had been captured by some men of the Nizam's Army and the Razakars. Sent a protest to Laik Ali at 9 P.M.

September 8, 1948 :

Edwards gave a statement to the Press about medicines. Hyderabad is in a panic. Had no mind to write the novel. Telephone talk with Mummy. M -- came with Miss —. The days of slavery have not yet gone.

At 8 P.M. talked to Sardar on the phone. Evacuation of Europeans to start from tomorrow, the 9th. The Nizam's Government wants the release of 5 officers and 90 men captured by our army near Kodada.

September 9, 1948 :

In the morning received a wireless message from the States Ministry. Also a telephone from Army H. Q. Delhi, and Southern Command, Poona. Contacted Fry. Wrote to Laik Ali for providing facilities for the plane which is to take Europeans out of Hyderabad. Things are moving.

Vinayakrao and the lawyers came and handed over a

copy of the letter written by the Pleaders' Protest Committee. There was excitement the whole day.

Nizam sent a telegram to Rajaji making an appeal 'to accommodate Hyderabad's point of view as indicated in last June's discussion.'

At night, had a telephone talk with Sardar.

September 10, 1948 :

Woke up early in the morning. BOAC, coming to evacuate the Britishers, was flying over *Dakshina Sadan*. Got up in excitement. After all we were coming to grips; all my labour of these 9 months has not been in vain.

Tatachari came; then R. S. M. Worked on the 'Times of *Ala-ud-Din Khalji*'.

Telephoned to Buch, also to Bharucha, about the transmitter, and to Lata in Sanskrit to convey a message to Mummy.

Gave orders to Sankaranarayanan about preparing a list of Officers for evacuating. (This was only to allay panic.) Evidently, Delhi doesn't want to evacuate us.

About 113 Britishers evacuated. About 10 families went by train. Panic continues in the city. A large number of troops are going to Kodada side.

At 7-30 P.M. received the reply of the Nizam's Government refusing the demands of the Union. Transmitted it to Delhi.

Brown's message makes the most interesting reading.

11-15 P.M. Message from Rajaji for the Nizam—again appealing to him to accept his advice. Enquired at King Kothi. Nizam had gone to sleep.

On September 10, the Governor-General replied to the Nizam's letter that the Indian troops had been withdrawn as a gesture of trust when the Standstill Agreement was reached; that law and order had now completely broken down inside the State; that the Nizam's Government had not been able to deal with either the Razakars or the Communists; that the Government of India could not therefore any longer be silent spectator simply maintaining the position on the border.

In reply to Rajaji's telegram of the 10th, the Nizam still maintained that his troops were in a position to maintain law

and order. Apart from the legal and moral side of the issue, the Nizam said, the proposal to bring the Indian Army would create an unprecedented upheaval.

Message of Rajaji for the Nizam was delivered at 7-15 A.M. by Major Singh. York plane came again to evacuate Britishers. In all, about 200 left. Britishers in the army declined to evacuate and decided to act in civilian jobs. Camouflage. They are paid so well that they do not want to go. A plane for American evacuees left with W — and his dog! It is reported that King Farouk has agreed to help Hyderabad. I wonder whether it is true.

Lunch with Pannalal. Telephoned to Buch.

Nizam has again sent a telegram to His Majesty. He is a great fellow...

In the evening the reporters met me. Had a quiet dinner.

Menon's official message delivering ultimatum sent to the Nizam at 7-30 P.M.

Telephone talk with Sardar. Evidently, our army is going to be here. Raju, Venkatavardhan and Ram-singh have already gone on leave. Y — has bolted. Annoyed with him ... Talked to Buch about him.

Telephone talk with Mummy. She wanted to come to Hyderabad, but I asked her not to. She met Rajaji, Sardar, Mrs. Paudit and the rest of them at New Delhi.

Earlier in the morning telephoned to M. P. Amin for securing about Rs. 40,000 donation for the Bhavan.

A report that a Pakistan plane was coming. Informed Delhi and Poona. Evidently, it was a fake plane.

On the night of the 10th, Moin Nawaz Jung, the genius who wrought this catastrophe for Hyderabad, left by a Sydney Cotton plane to lead the Hyderabad Delegation to the Security Council. He took his family and all his belongings with him in the plane. Perhaps he foresaw, or rather knew, that his dreams had crumbled and both the State of Hyderabad and the Nizam's ambitions were buried under their ruins.

CHAPTER XXX

THE STEN-GUN INCIDENT

ON the morning of September 12, I had a talk with Sardar on the telephone. He just hinted that things were moving. 'The bullock cart must some time or the other come out of the rut,' he said, using the Gujarati idiom.

The news of Jinnah's death was broadcast on the radio. My mind naturally went back to the very friendly relations that had existed between us at one time. I thought of his leadership of the Home Rule League Movement; of my leaving the Congress with him; of how I had worked under him when he wanted to found an independent party; of how we had parted; of how he had frustrated the national destiny of India; of how cleverly he had created Pakistan by playing upon British and Hindu weakness.

Major Singh, as usual, went the round of Meadow's Barracks. He reported that everything was in order. In the evening some friends brought the report that Razvi's camp was greatly excited. Shastri came and told me of the orders he had issued. The Indian Army, he had said, was expected to march into Hyderabad on the 15th and the Razakars had been given orders to blow up the bridges before it came. The 'Peacock Airborne Division' had also figured largely in Razvi's Talk.

I heard a report that Hyderabad had been mined for miles to prevent the Indian Army from coming in.

In response to an invitation which surprised me not a little, I went to dine with Laik Ali. We first talked of Jinnah and I spoke of my old relations with him. Laik Ali was, of course, an ardent adherent of his.

Laik Ali then asked me to leave Hyderabad before anything happened. 'Your presence would embarrass us considerably,' he said. 'If you like, I will place an aeroplane at your disposal.'

'Thank you, Laik Ali,' I said. 'Whatever happens, my place is in Hyderabad and I am going to be here.'

Then we came to an arrangement that should there be any conflict—Laik Ali did not expect it for two more days—the

employees of the Government of India would be kept interned in Meadows Barracks. With regard to myself and my personal staff, I told him that I should be willing to stay wherever he wished.

Laik Ali was evidently unhappy. While parting—and somehow I felt that this was to be our last meeting on the footing which we then occupied—I made a final appeal, even though I knew that it was not likely to create any impression.

‘Laik Ali, why do you risk all these things?’ I asked. ‘Don’t you think the risks are great enough for you to make a good bargain? Even now if you are in the mood, you can do a lot. You are a sensible man. I have never been able to understand your attitude.’

‘Never, never, will I let Hyderabad go with India,’ he replied and he repeated his favourite phrase. ‘There is such a thing as *sahadat* (martyrdom)’.

On the morning of the 13th, the radio brought the news that our troops had entered the Hyderabad territory. We all bestirred ourselves. We collected all the important papers, put them in bath tubs, poured petroleum on and set fire to them.

Immediately the post, telegraph and telephone controls were alerted and asked to keep me acquainted with whatever happened. Arrangements had already been made to dislocate the telegraph and telephone control-room in case the Hyderabad forces tried to take possession of them.

I put together a few of the things which I wanted to take with me and informed Sardar and my wife of the situation by telephone. Every few minutes, Krishnaswami, who was on the telephone, kept me in touch with what was happening. The men in charge of the telephone control-room were panicky and wanted orders to put the control out of order.

During all this time, lorry-loads of Razakars were passing to and fro on the road shouting warlike slogans, brandishing weapons and shaking their lances at the *Dakshina Sadan* in defiance.

Without effort, Sri Krishna’s words continued to rise in my mind:—

When a yogi

Satisfied with all that happens, his soul fully mastered,

His mind on his task bent,
Surrenders both his mind and his perception to Me,
He is dear to Me, indeed.

A little after twelve we had a hurried lunch.

About 2 P.M. two officers of the Nizam's Government came with a letter from Laik Ali which referred to our conversation of the previous night. In accordance with the arrangements we had made then, he desired that my personal guards should hand over their arms to the officers and station themselves inside Meadows Barracks, which were also to be placed in charge of the officers. Then he added:—

I do not know what your own programme is going to be. In case you would like to fly back, we shall provide every facility for your journey... In the interests of your own safety I would ask you to remove with your personal staff to Greenlands, the guest house, so that we may be able to discharge the duties of protecting you satisfactorily.

The two officers who had brought the letters had no clear instructions. I, therefore, told them to accompany Major Singh to Laik Ali in order to get their doubts cleared.

Soon after the control room told me that there was some movement of troops in the vicinity. I at once put one call through to my wife and again bade her good-bye; and another to Sardar to bid him good-bye and to tell him that within a few minutes the telephone would be out of action.

Immediately came Menon's call.

'Hello, Munshi!' said he in his cheerful voice. 'Don't worry. My Government have asked me to tell you that you need not worry. They have got full confidence in you and they will support you in whatever you do. . .'

The line broke; the telephone went dead. I could not help laughing heartily at this message, for at the moment the *Dakshina Sadan* was being raided.

Brigadier Habib of the Nizam's army rushed into *Dakshina Sadan* with four or five lorry-loads of soldiers with fixed bayonets. As they rushed in, the Kumaon Company opposed them. Some of our soldiers were manhandled and a few of them were actually wounded. It was a critical moment. I went to the terrace and shouted to our men to lay down their arms. Major Singh also rushed down at my instance, and took a brave stand between the two opposing companies and averted a serious conflict.

As soon as my guards gave way, the soldiers rushed into the house, shouting '*pakado, maro*'. Among them were several Razakars.

The Nizam's soldiers broke into every room on the ground floor and arrested all the servants. While this was going on, Brigadier Habib came to the first floor with two soldiers with fixed bayonets and rushed into the room in which I was sitting. He approached me as if he meant to arrest me and asked me in a voice by no means polite, to accompany him to Greenlands without delay.

I lost my temper and shouted at Brigadier Habib. 'What do you mean by this outrage? I have just had two officers here with a request from Laik Ali that I should accompany them to Greenlands; they have gone to disarm my men and take charge of Meadows Barracks. You have no business to bring armed soldiers into my room and talk to me in the way you are doing. I am willing to go wherever Laik Ali wants. But if you cannot behave yourself and your escort does not get out of my room, I shall not leave.'

Habib was taken aback and ordered his soldiers to withdraw from the first floor. I asked Major Singh to go with Habib and hand over charge of Meadows Barracks to him saying that I would wait for him.

He went down, talked to Laik Ali on the telephone and left with Major Singh.

At about 5 P.M. with my personal staff, which consisted of Major Singh, the Security Officer, Krishnaswamy, Rama Rao and another personal assistant, I was taken to Greenlands under military escort. On the way we met Razakars going about brandishing weapons and shouting slogans of victory.

At Greenlands there were some foreign correspondents still, as also an unfortunate Hindu who had been appointed a minister in the place of Joshi only two days before. They were excited by the Police Action and wanted me to tell them all that was happening, but I knew less than they did.

At 7 P.M. Mrs. El Edroos came to apologise to me on behalf of her husband for the rude behaviour of Brigadier Habib. She was very friendly. She whispered to me that her husband was an 'angel' and that in his opinion the Police Action would not last for more than three days. This was interesting enough.

We had dinner by ourselves and Major Singh took every precaution for my safety. My personal staff slept in such a position that if anyone made an attempt to come near me, they would come to know of it.

At 11-30 A.M. Ali Yavar Jung came to me. Evidently, he had come after obtaining permission from Laik Ali. We had a general talk and he referred to Razvi's plan that the Hindu population of Hyderabad should be exchanged with the same number of Muslims from India!

On the morning of the 14th, we were taken to Lake View, the palatial guest house, where the Moncktons had lived. From its drawing-room one looks down at green lawns running down to the main road. From the first floor where we were lodged, we had a distant view of the beautiful lake.

In fact, it was an internment. We were in charge of a military officer and soldiers were posted in the compound as well as in the corridor and verandahs on the ground floor. The fact that four soldiers were standing guard over us near the open doors of the dining-room while we took our meals, was scarcely appetising.

We could not go out and no one was allowed access to us. The telephone, too, was inaccessible. The outside world came to us through the radio, but the Indian broadcasts were either jammed or far from clear. The Hyderabad radio was clear, and it went on repeating '*Insha Allah!*' The Hyderabad Army is winning rapid successes.'

Laik Ali saw me that day. He was solicitous for my comfort and apologised for his inability to let me move out of Lake View. He could not take the risk of my being insulted or maltreated by the Razakars. I said I understood the position.

'What is this? Your troops are entering Hyderabad from three sides,' he asked indignantly.

'Did you expect them to present their cards to you and seek your permission before entering Hyderabad?' I asked in reply.

I asked for my cook, who had been arrested and lodged in Meadows Barracks. The cook, sent to me in the evening, came limping. He and the other servants had been severely beaten.

But this Mang cook from Bengal had a great sense of humour. When pressed to say who used to visit me he had

replied in his broken Bengali-Hindi, 'How do I know? I don't know the names of others. I know one man who came to see my master. He was the Nizam. He came often.'

'The Nizam!' shouted his interrogator.

'Yes, the Nizam. Sure.'

'How do you know?'

'His photo is all over the town.'

My diary notes till the 11th had already been posted to Buch under sealed cover. Lest my impressions of the following days might be lost, I began the diary notes again in the form of a sequel to my trilogy of historical novels in Gujarati, using the names of the characters, but in a setting which would easily enable my wife to follow what was happening to us.

My time was spent between *dhyana*, *Bhagavad Gita*, hearing the broadcasts and gossiping with my companions, who behaved with true loyalty.

On the 15th, the Hyderabad Radio reported rapid victories while the Indian broadcasts announced the capture of Naldurg. Between the two reports, our uncertainty knew no bounds.

At 6-20 P.M. I went down to the terraced lawn for my usual walk, as I had done the day before.

Krishnaswamy and I stepped out of the drawing-room into the verandah to find that a non-commissioned officer was standing with eight or ten guards at the extreme end of the topmost terraced garden into which the steps of the drawing-room led.

As, accompanied by Krishnaswamy, I was coming down the steps, the N.C.O. waved to me to convey that I should go back into the drawing-room. I declined to heed him and went down towards the lawn.

'*Undar Chale Jao*', (Go in), shouted the N.C.O.

I went a few feet further on the grass, Krishnaswamy a few feet behind me.

The angry N.C.O. came with his men to within twenty-five feet of me, and cocked his sten-gun and pointing at me, shouted '*Undar jao, undar jao*' (Go in; go in).

I stood where I was. 'Don't speak to me like that,' I said, 'Call your officer. He is inside.'

The N.C.O. was threatening. 'I have my orders. Go in.'

'I am not your prisoner. I refuse to go inside,' I replied.

Thus we stood, the sten-gun levelled at me, I facing him. Some ten minutes went by.

'Go in!' he shouted.

Someone—I think the manager of Lake View—had seen what was happening. He rushed to the officer, who, it appears, was not in uniform.

In a few minutes someone came and whispered a message to the N.C.O. Thereupon he uncocked his sten-gun and began walking away with his men.

'Are you satisfied that everything is alright?' I asked.

He turned to me threateningly. 'Many things will happen still,' he shouted.

In the meantime, Major Singh and Hussein, the officer in charge, came out. The officer was very apologetic. But when I asked Major Singh to inform Laik Ali of what had happened, the officer refused him permission to do so. Next day I sent a letter to Laik Ali about the incident, who saw me immediately and expressed regret for it.

I had faced a rather nasty situation boldly, but after meals, alone in my room, I realised what I was in for. The Razakars were thirsting for my blood. Every one of the twenty odd soldiers in Lake View would be only too glad to put his bullet into me.

Walking up and down in that room—I think the moonlight shimmered on the distant lake, but I am not sure—I proceeded to wind up my life.

I could not stop my imagination from galloping away. I looked back at how step by step I had struggled hard to achieve something or the other till that moment. I thought of my father, who had believed in me; of my mother, who had loved me with such passionate devotion; of Lakshmi, who had done and suffered so much to make me happy; of Lila, now breathlessly following the course of events, her heart palpitating at what I must be suffering; of our children.

I read the *Bhagavad Gita*: I sang all the half-forgotten snatches of the songs I had known in early days.

I felt that I was not going to come out of this mess. Nevertheless, I remember to have been possessed with a curi-

ous sense of contentment. I had done my best. I had no regrets. I had loved my duty.

I went to sleep quite happily at about 3 A.M. and rose late in the morning. My temperature had risen to 100°.

CHAPTER XXXI

THE COLLAPSE

ON September 16, my temperature began to fluctuate between 100° and 103°. The Radio was not very encouraging. The Hyderabad broadcasts announced victories.

In the afternoon, Raja Mahboob Karan saw me on behalf of the Prince of Berar. He told me that Naldurg, which according to official estimates was strong enough to stand out for three months, had been occupied by the Indian Army within a few hours.

Late at night, Deen Yar Jung came to tell me that the Nizam wanted my advice. El Edroos had gone to the Nizam, he said, and told him in unequivocal terms that he could not resist the Indian Army any longer.

Laik Ali had been called upon to resign, but had refused to do so and asked for ten days' grace. The Nizam did not know what to do. Would I be good enough to give him some advice?

Circumstanced as I was, I was not in a position to contact New Delhi. The only advice that I could possibly give Deen Yar Jung, therefore, was that the Nizam should comply with the demands of the Government of India in all respects: order a cease fire; welcome the Police Action; dismiss the Laik Ali Ministry; ban the Razakars; arrest Razvi and release Swami Ramananda Tirtha and the Congressmen from prison.

On the morning of September 17, General El Edroos came to see me. He said that he had a talk with the Nizam, in which he had frankly admitted that it was not possible for him to resist the Indian Army any longer. The previous day Laik Ali had been asked to resign, but would not. This morning the Nizam had again called upon him to submit his resignation, which he had agreed to do.

Either General Edroos or Deen Yar Jung, or both, told me that the Nizam would invite me to meet him at 4 P.M. to seek my advice. A little later, Raja Mahboob Karan came with

the same message. The news of Laik Ali's resignation had come to most people in Hyderabad as a tremendous relief.

At 11 A.M., Laik Ali came to Lake View himself and told me that he had submitted his resignation. He would meet me again at about 1 P.M., he said, on his return from the mosque, where he was going for his prayers.

Curiously enough, the Hyderabad Radio had all along been telling us that the Nizam's Army was sweeping the countryside and approaching Goa. The Indian broadcasts were now clearer. There was no doubt that the Indian Army was approaching Hyderabad.

In the meantime, I had news that Laik Ali and his Ministers had met in the Shah Manzil and were busy burning important papers.

At 1 P.M. Laik Ali came and handed me a message signed by the Nizam, to be transmitted to Rajaji, our Governor-General.

The message ran:

My Government has tendered its resignation and asked me to take the political situation into my hand completely.

In answer to this I have informed them that I am sorry this was not done earlier and it is too late for me to do anything at this critical juncture. However, I inform Your Excellency that I have ordered cease-fire to my troops by this evening and also have ordered to disband the Razakars and am allowing the Indian troops to occupy Bolarum and Secunderabad barracks.

The Nizam's message continued to the effect that he had constituted a new cabinet of old and faithful public servants and invited Sir Mirza Ismail to be the President. This was in pursuance of the suggestion made by Lord Mountbatten, he said, that Sir Mirza should be appointed the Prime Minister, and that if this arrangement met with Rajaji's approval, he would send a chartered plane to bring Sir Mirza to Hyderabad to carry on negotiations.

The latter portion was an ingenuous device to ignore all that had happened since the departure of Lord Mountbatten. It was so ridiculous that I sent a message to the Nizam that the Government of India would not appreciate this attitude and that, if he had no objection, I would only wireless the first part quoted above. Deen immediately informed me that the Nizam had no objection to my deleting the objectionable passage.

Soon after Laik Ali's broadcast came through:

Early this morning the cabinet felt that there was no point in sacrificing human blood against heavy odds and arms and aircraft from the Indian Union. Taking all this into consideration, the Council decided to submit its resignation and to place their responsibilities of State into the august hands of the ruler. This humble petition, though received rather late, was accepted by the Nizam and he agreed to take the full responsibility of State and to form a new Cabinet to take over from to-morrow (Saturday).

With this broadcast Laik Ali, and with him the Ittehad men who tried to disrupt India and failed, made their last bow and disappeared from the stage.

The difficulty now was how to send the Nizam's message to New Delhi, for all communications between Hyderabad and Delhi had been cut off for the last five days. I also had my doubts as to whether the wireless set in the *Dakshina Sadan* was in working order. A car was placed at my disposal. The operator was brought from Meadows Barracks, and accompanied by him and Major Singh, I went to *Dakshina Sadan*.

All the roads of Hyderabad and Secunderabad through which we passed were deserted. *Dakshina Sadan* itself lay forlorn, for the Nizam's guard posted there had bolted. The house and the wireless room had been heavily padlocked and it was with some difficulty that we forced an entry into the house by breaking open a door. All the rooms were in a mess. Curtains had been torn; the furniture and photographs had been broken; some pots and pans which had been used by the occupying soldiers were lying about in confusion. It appeared that when they had heard of the resignation of the Laik Ali Ministry, they had fled leaving everything behind.

The wireless room was then broken open and the operator tried to establish contact with New Delhi in order to convey the message of the Nizam to Rajaji and Panditji.

In spite of high fever, I was borne up by the excitement of the occasion.

Soon after, for the first time in my whole term as Agent-General of India in Hyderabad, I received a personal letter from His Exalted Highness. It ran:

Dear Mr. Munshi.

I shall be glad to see you this after-noon at 4 P.M. at the Kothi in case you can come. Will you please let me know whether you can come?

At 4 P.M., when I went to the King Kothi, the Nizam looked the very image of desolation. His nerves had practically given way. He told me that 'the vultures had resigned, and he did not know what to do.' With a trembling hand he handed me a copy of the resignation submitted by the Laik Ali Ministry.

Meanwhile, my first anxiety was for the unarmed citizens of Hyderabad. There were quite a few thousand armed Razakars still at large in the city, and Kasim Razvi had provided them with six thousand rifles with instructions to run amuck and kill as many Hindus as possible.

'Your Highness must take note of the fact that Hyderabad has no Government for the moment,' I said. 'I have been through the streets of Hyderabad and Secunderabad and the troops and Police have both disappeared. Even the guards at the *Dakshina Sadan* have run away. Major-General Chaudhury will take a day, perhaps more, to reach Hyderabad; the surrounding areas have been heavily mined. In the meantime Your Highness should call on General El Edroos to preserve law and order in the city. If he does not take charge immediately, there may be serious outburst of violence and innocent people might be massacred.'

The Nizam sent for General El Edroos immediately. Till he arrived, we sat facing each other, the lips of Ala Hazrat twitching nervously all the time. When General El Edroos came, I explained to him the necessity of keeping order in the town. The Nizam also asked him what he had to say about it. El Edroos replied that in these circumstances the proper course was for the Commander to take charge of the City and surrender it to Major-General Chaudhury when he came. Edroos was thereupon given orders to take immediate charge of the City and maintain order.

'I am sending a chartered plane for Sir Mirza. He must carry on the Government,' said the Nizam.

'I have had no communication from my Government so far', I said. 'I do not know whether they will agree to Sir Mirza taking charge. But some arrangement must be made in the meantime to carry on the administration so that innocent blood might not be shed.'

'I will ask Edroos and Deen Yar Jung to carry on the Government in the meantime,' was the Nizam's reply.

I did not like the idea of the fate of hundreds of thousands of innocent Hindus being left in the hands of these two men, whom I had no reason to trust. Till quite recently, Edroos had lent himself to Ittehad manoeuvres and except for the last few days, Deen Yar Jung had been closely associated with the ruling group of the Ittehad. Unless some trustworthy Hindus were associated with them, there might be a massacre of the innocents within the next forty-eight hours.

'Whatever ministry you appoint, it will have to be done hereafter in consultation with the States Ministry,' I said. 'That can only be done when Major-General Chaudhury arrives and all communications are re-established between Hyderabad and New Delhi. In the meantime, to regain the confidence of the people, Hindus should be associated with Edroos and Deen Yar Jung.'

'Whom would you like to be associated with them?' asked the Nizam.

I knew that Ramachar and Pannalal Pittie commanded the general confidence of the Hindus of Hyderabad and I suggested their names.

Even in that hour, the Nizam's cleverness did not forsake him: 'Why not add a Muslim public man like Abul Hasan Syed Ali?'

I knew Abul Hasan Syed Ali very well. A very broad-minded Muslim, he held the office of the President of the Privy Council of the State. I agreed. At my instance, the Prince of Berar was appointed the Chairman.

This joint committee of Hindus and Muslims was to be in control of the city till our troops arrived.

Meanwhile, the Security Council was meeting in Paris with Moin Nawaz pleading Hyderabad case against India. I, therefore, advised the Nizam that he should give a broadcast talk to the world to the effect that he had welcomed the Police Action; that he had invited the Union troops to enter Hyderabad to help him in restoring order in the State; and that he was withdrawing the submission which had been made to the Security Council by Laik Ali Ministry.

As the Nizam himself had sought my advice and accepted it, I thought it was appropriate that he himself should announce

the surrender to the world. But it seemed he had never so much as seen a broadcasting station.

'How do you broadcast?' he asked me.

'It is very easy,' I said. 'One has only to speak into a tube.'

At his request I also agreed to broadcast a few words after he had finished. His message was then drafted and approved by me and he inserted a sentence acknowledging the help I had given him.

From the King Kothi I proceeded to Shah Manzil to call on Laik Ali. I owed him that piece of courtesy for the consideration which he had invariably shown to me. He was in a resigned mood. We parted in as friendly a manner as we had when first we had met as client and counsel.

I then called General El Edroos into conference. I knew that mines had been laid around Hyderabad and I asked him to make arrangements to get them removed.

I had no idea of military formalities, so that I did not know how Major-General Chaudhury should be received, nor was there any possibility of instructions being received from New Delhi. We decided, therefore, that El Edroos should accompany the Prince of Berar, the *de jure* Commander-in-Chief, who should offer a formal surrender. We contacted the Prince. He was willing to do so only if I accompanied him. I informed General Rajendrasinhji by a wireless of what we had decided.

From the conference I went straight to the wireless station and wrote out my own broadcast. When he began to speak on the radio, the Nizam did not know at first how to do so and fumbled. His voice trembled. He departed from the text by referring to me as '*Ke Em Saheb Munshi Saheb*'. His broadcast ran:

My beloved people,

I have great pleasure to inform you that I have sent the following message to-day to His Excellency Mr. Rajagopalachari, Governor-General of India:

My Government has tendered its resignation and has asked me to take the political situation into my purview. In answer to this, I said that I was sorry that this was not done earlier and it was not possible for me to do anything at this critical juncture. However, I have ordered a cease-fire to my troops and have also ordered the ban of the Razakars and allowing of the Indian Union to occupy Bolarum and Secunderabad tomorrow. Further, till I have had an opportunity of appoint-

ing a Prime Minister and a regular Ministry, I hereby constitute the following into a committee: His Highness the Prince of Berar, Commander-in-Chief; Major-General El Edroos, Commander; Nawab Deen Yar Jung, Commissioner of Police; Mr. Ramachar, ex-Minister; Mr. Abul Hasan Syed Ali, ex-President, Ittehad-ul-Musalmeen; and Mr. Panna Lal.

I am also calling Sir Mirza Ismail, Nawab Zain Yar Jung and Mr. Aravamudu Ayyangar as soon as communications are resumed and will take the opportunity of consulting them to enable me to meet the situation which has arisen on account of the dislocation and resignation of the Ministry.

I have also issued orders for the immediate release of Swami Ramananda Tirtha, President of the State Congress, who, I am sure, will help Hyderabad in this crisis. I have also ordered the cancellation of orders and warrants against members of the Central Committee of Action of the State People's Congress.

I have also had consultations with my friend, Mr. K. M. Munshi, India's Agent-General. I take this opportunity to acknowledge the help he rendered me on this occasion.

I appeal to all my beloved people irrespective of caste and creed to maintain calm and patience. I am confident that once law and order are restored in Hyderabad, it would not be difficult to arrive at an arrangement with the Government of India under which my people, whose welfare is my only concern, can live in peace and harmony with the rest of the people in India.

I have also ordered the representatives of my old Ministry, who are now prosecuting the appeal on behalf of Hyderabad before the U.N. Security Council, not to press it as I am opening a new chapter of friendliness with India.

I need not assure my people that I will try to maintain the best traditions of the Asaf Jahl Dynasty of looking after my people, irrespective of caste and creed.

Then I read out my broadcast, which ran as follows:

I am speaking from the Nizam's radio as H.E.H. asked me to do it. I take this opportunity because no other means of communication are available for the moment. Last night I was contacted and I conveyed to H.E.H. the meaning and purpose of the Police Action which my Government was taking to restore law and order in Hyderabad. I am glad to say that H.E.H. was pleased to appreciate the action and issued the cease-fire order this morning. I have conveyed to H.E. Sri C. Rajagopalachariar the message sent by H.E.H.

I want to speak particularly to the people of Hyderabad. Their lot is cast with the people of India. We are one people and we cannot be parted. We must continue to remain, to

use H.E.H.'s phrase, 'in integrated harmony' so that free India may be great in every sphere of life. One assurance I can give you—an assurance again and again given by our Prime Minister, Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru: India is a secular State. It knows no difference of religion or race. To every man it gives the full rights of citizenship. And neither Hindus nor Muslims need be apprehensive of the treatment. I request the people not to get into panic. The entry of the troops will take place in a spirit of friendliness. No breach of law and order will be tolerated and no peaceful citizen will be molested. The Indian Army is an army of friends to rescue the life of Hyderabad from the nightmare of the last twelve months. I appeal to Hindus and Muslims both to act with mutual trust and goodwill to enable Hyderabad to achieve its honoured place as an integral part of India.

On my way back to *Dakshina Sadan* I found that the streets of Hyderabad and Secunderabad were full of widely excited Hindus shouting national slogans. The National Flags were being carried in procession in several of the streets. At one or two places I had to get down from my car and address them, as also to exhort them not to stage any demonstrations or to indulge in violence.

When I reached home at about 8-15 P.M. Panditji's message was waiting for me:

You should not, repeat not, broadcast to-night. You should not make any commitment on our behalf without instructions.

Hyderabad Army should formally surrender to our Army Commander.

Pending further instructions our Army Commander will be in charge of the general administration.

The surrender will be a purely military function in which you will not participate and you should not enter Secunderabad with the army column.

Apparently they did not want me, as their representative, to get mixed up with the military activities. At the moment, however, either because of the high fever or the strain which I had undergone during the day, I felt deeply hurt at the tone of the message. Apart from what I had gone through, I felt that I deserved to have it couched in a less peremptory tone. I muttered *Sevadharmaha parama gahano yoginamapyagam-yaha*. 'To serve well is extremely difficult, it is difficult even for *yogis*'.

I replied as follows:

Your wireless received after my broadcast was delivered. Have made no commitments. Am cancelling the arrangements so far as I am concerned and carrying out your instructions. Hope you will forgive me if I have committed a *faux pas*.

In the meantime, Swami Ramananda Tirtha had been released. I was afraid for his life, for the Razakars were still moving about, and therefore invited him to come and stay with me.

I sensed at the time, and came to know later, that what I had done during those three fateful days in Hyderabad had met with the disapproval of certain quarters in New Delhi. My action was construed as extricating the Nizam from a very difficult situation. It enabled him, it was said, to liquidate the old regime so as to prepare for the arrival of the Army. It was also felt that what I did compromised the freedom of the Government of India in dealing with the Nizam as well as the situation as they thought fit; the situation was a military one and I was not justified in stepping into it.

But those in New Delhi who thought like this had little idea of the situation in which I found myself. I was completely cut off from the world, as good as marooned on an inaccessible island. There was no authority functioning in Hyderabad. Razvi had distributed arms to his followers and given orders for indiscriminate massacre when the Army entered Hyderabad. No one knew when the Army would arrive, for the city was mined for miles around. If it forcibly took over Hyderabad, the blood of the innocents would flow.

The Security Council was on the eve of debating the question of Hyderabad. If I refused to give advice to the Nizam, the advantage which would accrue to the Government of India by his voluntary surrender, would be lost. Bewilderment, uncertainty and confusion would follow. The massacre of the innocents by Razvi's men when the Army entered Hyderabad, would be inevitable. What was an operation for rescuing the people of Hyderabad would have been converted into a military conquest, and the martyr's crown, which Bahadur Shah is claimed to have worn, would have settled on the brow of the Nizam.

In these circumstances, I felt it my duty to see that a situation was created in which the Indian Army would be invited by

the Nizam himself and the State could be taken over by the Indian authorities peacefully whenever it came on the scene.

The so-called Hyderabad Delegation had made a point before the Security Council that the Nizam was only a prisoner in the hands of the Indian Army when he made the broadcast. Nothing could be further from the truth. Major-General Chaudhury was about forty miles away from Hyderabad at the time. I was practically a prisoner in the hands of the Nizam and at the mercy of Razvi. I was alone, without any one to whom I could turn for consultation or help. If I gave the advice to the Nizam to surrender, it was because he sought it; if I revised his broadcast, it was at his request; if I made the broadcast myself, it was at his insistence, a price which I had to pay to get him to make his broadcast, which I thought would straighten out India's position before the Security Council, and which in fact it did.

General El Edroos immediately put a guard round the house in which Razvi lived. He made no resistance. For the moment, he was deflated.

CHAPTER XXXII

HOW THE COUNTRY TOOK IT

IN order to see the events in a proper perspective, it is necessary to keep in view the happenings in the country during the few days that I was interned in Lake View.

Apart from the preparations which the Hyderabad Government and the Ittehad were making to resist the Government of India, they were confident that in the end New Delhi would not have the courage to take any action, and if ever an action was taken, the Government of India would collapse.

As already stated, they were of the view that, deprived of the British Officers and short of equipment, the Indian Army was incapable of undertaking a serious campaign against Hyderabad, particularly as they were inextricably involved in Kashmir. This belief was fostered, among others, by the Pakistan Radio, the British ex-officers of the Indian Army employed by Hyderabad and the senior officers of the Hyderabad Army who never felt any doubt about their ability to 'slash' the Indian Army if an occasion arose.

The Ittehad leaders, including Laik Ali, also believed that once action was taken against Hyderabad, there would be large-scale communal riots in the country, a risk which the Provincial Governments would not be prepared to take. They were equally convinced that if anything happened to Hyderabad, the Muslims in India would rise as one man in their support.

The Ittehad leaders were equally confident that the leaders as well as the general public opinion of Pakistan was wholeheartedly with the Nizam in his bid for independence. Though Mr. Jinnah had bluntly told them that he would not 'endanger Pakistan for a handful of effete nobility', they expected that, if the Government of India decided to take action against Hyderabad, the Pakistan Government would be compelled, by pressure of public opinion, to intervene. They had no doubt that if Pakistan did intervene, India would be overwhelmed without any difficulty.

During this period, the whispering galleries of Delhi

echoed with the differences between Panditji and Sardar. These echoes resounded in Hyderabad in magnified volume. The agents of the Nizam's Government who hovered about the Secretariat in New Delhi, were also not slow in drawing upon their imagination when retailing stories about the rift between the two leaders. Wishful thinking added certainty to the belief that if Sardar proposed police action against Hyderabad, Panditji, who would see in it the loss of his international prestige, would force him to resign.

In the meantime, the whole of India was astir with a keen sense of danger. The activities of the Razakars and the attitude of the Nizam's Government had come to be looked upon as a national danger. The reports relating to the Razakar atrocities and the material documents which had passed between the two Governments, had appeared in the English as well as Indian language press. In consequence, indignation, coupled with impatience, was sweeping the country.

By the end of July, Lord Mountbatten had left India; with him departed the desire to temporise over the Hyderabad question. It is true that doubts and hesitation still ruled some influential quarters in Delhi. In the meanwhile, Sardar, now in fairly good health, was in command of the situation. With his usual thoroughness and foresight, he began to deploy all the forces at his disposal concentrating on two ends, the collection of troops sufficient for a swift and decisive action and the maintenance of law and order in the country during the action.

Finding troops was not an easy matter. India's Western frontier and Kashmir could not be left undefended; caution required that any move of Pakistan to take advantage of the Hyderabad diversion should be forestalled. A good deal of readjustment was therefore necessary all over the country. The first constituents of the force earmarked for the operation, however, started moving quietly into strategic positions in May; the last constituents arrived about the middle of July; and throughout the monsoon they were being knit together into a cohesive force. In September it was a well-disciplined force of about 20,000 men in good fighting trim and full of confidence.

As against this, the strength of the armed forces of Hyderabad comprised a regular army of about 22,000 men

modelled on the British pattern, though somewhat short of artillery. In addition, Hyderabad had 10,000 irregulars armed with modern small arms; 10,000 armed police; 10,000 disciplined Arabs with a variety of fire arms; and about 100,000 Razakars, of whom some 20,000 had fire arms of sorts, the remaining having spears and swords.

The atrocities of the Razakars and the way in which the Nizam's Government had treated the Indian Union, had given the Indian troops a sense both of urgency and purpose. Every man in the army realised that if this danger was to be liquidated, it was to be done swiftly and thoroughly.

Most of the Indian officers connected with the planning of the operation, had at one time or the other seen the Hyderabad Army at close quarters. They were, therefore, confident that the outcome of the action would be speedy and unattended by any internal disorder. Only General Bucher, the British Commander-in-Chief, was hesitant throughout. He overestimated the capability of the Hyderabad army, underestimated that of his own troops, and knew not the ability of Sardar and the Provincial Governments to deal with the problems of internal law and order. Like most Englishmen, he was unable to realise that no price was too high to be paid for eliminating the Razakar menace which threatened the very existence of India.

All the efforts of the Ittehad leaders to mobilise the Muslims outside Hyderabad, made during the year-and-a-half, had little effect. With almost one voice, the Muslim Press in the country had declared that the Nizam had brought the trouble on himself by his own folly. Thoughtful Muslims, both inside and outside Hyderabad, had no sympathy for the Nizam or the Ittehad. On the contrary, they hated the Ittehad for keeping up communal tension throughout the country and endangering the happy relations with the Hindus to which they had been looking forward after the Partition.

Sardar, however, would take no chances. Under his direction, the Provincial Governments had made preparations to meet any local trouble. Action against possible outbursts of communal conflict was carefully planned and ready for implementation. No doubt, there were some prominent Muslim Leaguers in the country who had expressed sympathy with the Ittehad; they had to be rounded up. In several cities, security

measures were also taken and meetings banned.

In Delhi, there was a strong anti-Muslim feeling on account of the influx of the refugees from Pakistan. The police armed corps and the military stood ready there to go into action in the event of any Muslim hooliganism.

In Uttar Pradesh, there were some Muslim elements which wished Hyderabad well. They had been avowedly anti-Indian from the days of the Partition. They were therefore sternly warned by Pandit Govind Ballabh Pant, then the Chief Minister. 'Such elements', he said in a public pronouncement, 'are traitors to the Indian Union and will be dealt with severely.'

As a result of these precautions, when the Police Action started, the country was absolutely quiet. On the 16th, Sardar congratulated the Muslims and non-Muslims of India for the warm and unanimous support they had given to the Government in the action which they had to take against Hyderabad.

Though Sardar believed in action, he was the most circumspect of men. He fully realised that the first reaction of international opinion would be against India. At the same time, he knew by instinct how it would ultimately react if the country remained quiet and the action was swift and successful.

There were, no doubt, acute differences of opinion in Government circles in New Delhi about the time and manner of the intervention. There were stormy meetings of the Cabinet. Ultimately the communication addressed by Rev. Edwards to the societies of the different Churches in England, setting out the atrocities of the Razakars, a copy of which I had forwarded to the States Ministry, was helpful in allaying the fear that the international opinion would be against India.

The news of Mr. Jinnah's death was received on the 12th September. It was said by some that the date set for action was linked with his death. But, in fact, the date for action, September 13, was set on September 9, for the army authorities wanted three days' warning in order to move troops right up to their final positions. The rumours that action by the troops was imminent had reached Hyderabad. The Nizam's agents in New Delhi, however, had given the information that 15th was to be the D-Day. The way in which the real date was kept a secret contributed in no small measure to the swift success of the action.

I was given to understand that on the midnight of the 12th,

General Bucher called up Sardar on the telephone; it was a rare feat for any one to get him out of bed at that hour. General Bucher then advised Sardar to listen to him and postpone the action at least for some days. He also referred to the possible air attack on Ahmedabad and Bombay; a surprising thing for a Commander-in-Chief to believe. Sardar reminded General Bucher how London had suffered during the Great War and coolly assured him that Ahmedabad and Bombay both could stand up to an attack if it came.

In this connection, it is well worth mentioning that while General Bucher and men of his type, who were opposed to action, thought that the operation would last for some months, Sardar, on the advice of some Indian military officers, was firmly of the opinion that it would not last for more than a week. When the action came to an end in five days, Sardar publicly said that he was sorry that his estimate went wrong by two days.

At 4 A.M. on September 13, the main column of Indian troops entered Hyderabad from Sholapur. At dawn, the four other subsidiary columns from Ahmednagar and the border provinces of C. P., Madras and Mysore, also crossed the frontier.

It was about this time that a despatch of a foreign correspondent, who had enjoyed the lavish hospitality of Greenlands for days, was published in the papers. 'If ever any blood is shed in Hyderabad, the first to be shed will be that of the bird-like Munshi.'

When the news of the Police Action was announced to the world, the Greenlands hospitality paid dividends. Foreign newspapers became bitterly hostile to India. According to them the Police Action was an invasion of an independent neighbouring State. It is a curious commentary on the foreign outlook on India that it was more interested in Nizam's bid for independence based on communal fascism than in the sufferings of the people of Hyderabad or the dangerous situation created by the Communists' occupation of the four districts, or for that matter in India's existence as a democratic state which depended upon the elimination of the Razakars.

On September 15, there was a debate in the House of Commons in England. Both Sir Anthony Eden and Mr. Aneurin Bevan, who generally disagreed on most political

issues of the day, found themselves in agreement in condemning India. Sir Anthony Eden called India's action an 'act of aggression'. Lord Salisbury's heart was heavy, contemplating the fate of the Nizam, 'an old and faithful friend'.

On the 16th, the Security Council adopted Hyderabad's complaint against India as an item on its agenda.

The news of the Police Action and of my being cut off from all contacts in Hyderabad, found a place in every newspaper. My friends all over the country read it with a shock; they gave up hope of seeing me again.

The order which General Rajendrasinhji, the General Officer Commanding Southern Command located at Poona, issued on the 13th read: 'Go forward to your mission. Crush any resistance met and protect all law-abiding persons irrespective of religion, caste and creed.' Thus began 'Operation Polo'.

The entry of the Indian Army early on the 13th, took the Hyderabad authorities, both civil and military, by surprise.

They had relied on the word of General El Edroos and the declarations made by Kasim Razvi, that the advance would be halted at Naldurg and General Chaudhury's column beaten back.

At 8 A.M., on the morning of the 13th, Lt. T. T. More, an ex-British Army Commando, who had taken service with the Hyderabad army, was captured while driving a loaded jeep. When interrogated, he said that he had resigned from the Hyderabad Army under the instructions from the High Commissioner and was leaving the State as quickly as he could. But his jeep was discovered to be full of explosives. He had been sent out to blow up the bridges, including the one at Naldurg. This showed the wisdom of prompt action.

Neither the Hyderabad Army nor the ill-organised bands of irregulars, Arabs and Razakars, had ever seen a real army bent on serious business and the more they saw of it the less they liked it.

The position of Naldurg lent itself to defence. But though strongly garrisoned it was taken in a few hours with the casualties largely on the Hyderabad side.

Then followed disintegration. A complete rout began. Wherever the Indian columns appeared, the Hyderabad

troops either put up a token resistance or threw down their arms and fled towards Hyderabad City. The Razakars and the irregulars attempted a form of guerrilla warfare but usually ran away when the first shot was fired against them. In some places the advancing troops found bedding rolls still warm, the defenders having departed precipitately; at others, uniforms were found lying about, the men who had stood in them an hour or two earlier having decamped in civilian clothes.

There was considerable confusion at the Army Headquarters. Co-ordination of any sort ceased to exist. Staff officers went about issuing contradictory orders which confused the commanders who, in any case, had little intention of obeying them. The Nizam's Radio announced that the Talmud defile on the main approach had been captured by Indian troops after a stiff resistance even before they had reached the spot.

Some of the senior commanders of the Hyderabad Army deserted their posts in the field and submitted reports of having won battles which had never taken place. These reports were broadcast from the Hyderabad Radio. Quarrels developed between the regular Hyderabad forces and the Razakars, each claiming to have been let down by the other.

On the other hand, wherever the Indian troops appeared, they were welcomed by the population with open arms. The behaviour of the troops towards the civil population, whether Hindu or Muslim, was at all times correct and impartial and this in itself did much to restore confidence.

On September 15, a subsidiary Indian force entered Aurangabad. An attempt was made to lead the advancing columns into an ambush by showing a white flag, but they captured the fort without any substantial resistance.

Ibrahim, a lecturer in a local college in Aurangabad, was a fanatic Ittehad. He led a few innocent boys into facing the oncoming tanks of the Indian army. The officers in charge of the tanks begged the boys to go back. Many did; some did not and tried to oppose the progress of the tanks with spears and shouts!

Ibrahim ran away, was taken prisoner, but was released on assurances of loyalty. Later, he disappeared, perhaps to live in another land on the memories of the madness which had cost innocent lives.

The cease-fire order of the Nizam, broadcast on the 17th, came exactly 4 days and 13 hours after the Police Action had begun and sent a thrill of triumph and relief throughout the country.

The performance of Major-General Chaudhury was very neat, well planned and well executed. The fact that the clumsily organised forces of the Nizam disappeared at the first impact of the regular army—nothing else was possible—did not detract from the merits of the performance, which was, as Sardar had anticipated, swift and decisive. It raised the military reputation of India throughout the world.

On the 18th, Panditji congratulated the country on having preserved peace. By this time, India was in a jubilant mood, congratulating the Government and the Army on its successful operations.

On September 26, Rajaji, the Governor-General of India, ordered a national prayer to be offered to God. The happy manner in which one of the thorniest obstacles to Indian solidarity had been removed was certainly God's doing.

Pakistan had been fed on Hyderabad broadcasts of victory. On the Hyderabad Radio, it had heard of the battles that had been won by the Nizam's Army, and had been told that it was approaching Goa. Suddenly came the cease-fire broadcast of the Nizam and his unconditional surrender. A huge crowd lashed itself into fury. The demonstrators surrounded the house of Sri Sri Prakasa, the then High Commissioner for India in Pakistan, and marched to the house of Prime Minister Liaquat Ali Khan, demanding that the Pakistan Army should march on India. Mr. Liaquat Ali Khan had a hard time convincing them that he could not do it.

CHAPTER XXXIII

THE END OF THE ADVENTURE

ON the morning of September 18, the fever which was sapping my strength, showed no abatement. Dr. Naidu and other doctors examined me and diagnosed it as typhoid.

Typhoid demands absolute rest, but there was to be no rest for me. Deen Yar Jung, Zul Qader and Abdul Hasan Syed Ali brought a request from the Nizam that I should see him immediately. When I went to the King Kothi I found that the Nizam was worried about his wealth. He was anxious to know whether he would be allowed to have the King Kothi guarded by his own men when our troops came to Hyderabad. I told him that so far as I could see, his palace would not be disturbed and that our troops would certainly take steps to see that no harm came to him. At the same time, I told him, that I would phone up Sardar and ask for instructions.

On my return to *Dakshina Sadan* I had a talk with Sardar on the phone. His views were the same as mine and I conveyed them to the Nizam.

I learnt that Hindus had again come out into streets in large numbers, both in Secunderabad and Hyderabad. As the demonstrations were taking place near the camp of the Muslim refugees, there was likelihood of communal trouble.

I immediately contacted Ramachar, Panna Lal and Swami Ramanand and asked them to go about the city and request the people to disperse in order to avoid untoward incidents. I also drove through the main thoroughfare of Hyderabad and Secunderabad myself and asked the crowds to disperse. But wherever I went, the crowds, wild with excitement, regardless of my state of health, insisted on my addressing them.

As I returned to *Dakshina Sadan*, a very interesting report came to me. The busiest people during the day had been the barbers. The beards of the Razakars, together with their uniforms, lances and swords, were quickly finding a safe asylum in the nearby wells.

On the 18th, Rajaji replied to the Nizam's message. He

regretted that the Nizam had not taken the right action in time to avoid causing a complication of the issues. Meanwhile, as he had promised the day before, the Nizam sent me a letter instructing Nawab Moin Nawaz Jung to withdraw Hyderabad's appeal before the Security Council.

Sir Mirza Ismail contacted me on the phone. Evidently the Nizam had invited him to come to Hyderabad. I advised him not to come till he received instructions to do so from Sardar. The latter, when I contacted him, said that Sir Mirza would do well to remain at Bangalore.

The Prince of Berar also called on me. He was among those who had been friendly from the beginning and no one in Hyderabad was happier at the result than he.

In the afternoon the Indian Army entered the City without any incident. Crowds lined the roads waving the National Flags. They cheered the tanks wildly as they, on their way to the Secunderabad Cantonment, passed *Dakshina Sadan* and lowered their guns in salute to the Union Flag flying in its compound.

Major-General Chaudhury had Laik Ali and his colleagues arrested at once and so were arrested Razvi and his lieutenants. The vast majority of the Nizam's forces abandoned their arms and deserted their battalions.

The 'Peacock Airborne Division', the last hope of the Razakars, did not materialise. Four dummy planes, found at Bidar Airport, seemed to be all on which the hope had been based.

At about 4-30 P.M., Major-General Chaudhury himself arrived at *Dakshina Sadan* with his officers and had tea with me.

Doctor Naidu and other doctors then came and forced me to go to bed. So far, I had been bearing up through sheer excitement, but now I felt near collapse.

On the same day my wife and some of the children arrived at Secunderabad.

In the evening I wrote a personal letter to Sardar which ran as follows:

Hyderabad has now surrendered. Our Army has come back. My duty is, therefore, done. When you entrusted me with this work and Bapu told me that it was my *dharma* to undertake it, I accepted it. Your confidence and the grace of God only saved me from proving a failure. Even at the start, I had told Bapu

that if I failed in this mission, my public life would be at an end.

As you know, I have not spared any effort for nine months. I had accepted this duty as a parliamentary mission, which is finished now. So, if you permit me, I would like to be free.

This does not mean that I am not ready to serve you. I will always be ready, wherever and whenever you want me. But there is nothing left for me to do as Agent-General.

During the last four days, I have been with temperature running 101 and 102° F....

On the morning of the 19th, my fever was as high as ever and the doctors were insistent that I should stay in bed. I had to attend duty. General Rajendrasinhji was arriving by air, and, if I did not go to receive him, it would have looked improper.

Summoning up all my strength I went to the aerodrome. There—of all places—Major-General Chaudhury asked me: ‘What about you, Mr. Munshi?’

He was a young man flushed with victory, so that I could make allowances for his superior tone and the odd timing of his question.

‘Don’t worry about me,’ I told him. ‘My mission here is complete. Only yesterday I wrote a personal letter to Sardar asking him to relieve me.’

General Rajendrasinhji arrived and he and his officers had their luncheon with us. When the lunch was over, I bade them good-bye and went to bed. My temperature then stood at 104°.

Swami Ramananda Tirtha gave an interview to the Press:

Sri K. M. Munshi, the Indian Agent-General in Hyderabad, who was entrusted with the task, has been a tower of strength to the people of Hyderabad and his name will be remembered by posterity as their saviour.

This was before he came to know that I had fallen from grace with some circles in New Delhi.

On September 20, my temperature rose to 105° and family doctors, Dr. Nathubhai D. Patel and Dr. Sukhtankar, arrived from Bombay.

On the 21st, V. P. Menon, H. M. Patel, N. M. Buch and Krishna Prasada, Director-General of Posts and Telegraphs, arrived in Hyderabad.

I received a telegram from Panditji asking me to come to Delhi to attend a conference which he was holding with Sardar, General Rajendrasinhji and Major-General Chaudhury, but as I was in the grip of typhoid, I could not move from my bed.

On the 22nd, my wife and the family doctors took me home, too weak and faint, even to be able to sit up.

I was glad to learn that Sir A. Ramaswami Mudaliar had made an effective point of the broadcast of the Nizam before the Security Council. The Nizam had withdrawn the Hyderabad complaint to the Security Council, he said, before our armies reached Hyderabad; in fact, our forces had entered Hyderabad city at the Nizam's invitation.

On the 22nd, in response to a wireless message from the External Affairs Ministry, I prepared the message to be broadcast by the Nizam to the Muslim Nations. The broadcast, with some alterations and additions, was delivered by him on the 23rd, and was quoted before the United Nations by Sir Ramaswami Mudaliar.

The Nizam rang down the curtain of his ambitious bid for independence by announcing to the world the following:

In November last a small group which had organised a *quasi*-military organisation, hostile to Hyderabad's best traditions, surrounded the palace of my Prime Minister, Nawab of Chhatari, in whose wisdom I had the completest confidence, and Sir Walter Monckton, my Constitutional Adviser, and thus by duress compelled the Nawab of Chhatari and my other trusted ministers to resign and forced the Laik Ali Ministry on me. This group, with Kasim Razvi at its head, which had no stake in the country nor any record of service behind it, by methods reminiscent of Hitlerite Germany, took possession of the State, spread terror into all elements of society, Muslims and non-Muslims, that refused to bend their knees to them, committed arson and loot on a large scale, particularly on Hindus and rendered me completely helpless. For some time I was anxious to come to an honourable settlement with India, which India was willing to come to, but this group, in its ambition to found an Islamic State in which the Muslims alone of Hyderabad should have citizenship rights, got me to reject the offer made by the Government of India from time to time. I am a Muslim and am proud to be a Muslim; but I know that Hyderabad cannot remain apart from India. My ancestors never made any difference between the 86 per cent Hindus and the 14 per cent Muslims in the State. The relations between the two communities—political, social and religious—were the most cordial ever found anywhere in India. This was attained as a result of the policy which my ancestors and I pursued in the past. During the 8 months this group was in power aided by the Razakars it brought about the most intensive communal hatred which, unfortunately in the position that I was placed, I could not prevent.



Major-General Chaudhury, the author and Swami Ramananda Tirtha



uthor being carried from the aeroplane on a stretcher at Santa Cruz airport on September 22, 1948

CHAPTER XXXIV

STRANGE CASUALTIES

ONE of the minor casualties of the Police Action was the Agent-General and the members of his staff.

At my age, a protracted attack of typhoid, accompanied by continuous physical exertion in the first few days, was a pretty serious affair. The fever persisted till October 8, and in the meantime my doctors denied me any contact with the outside world. After that I convalesced for over a month. The auditory nerve of my left ear deteriorated.

The only person I saw before October 8 was Swami Ramananda Tirtha. He had just returned from Delhi and was going to Hyderabad to reorganise the Congress. When he asked my advice, I begged of him to forget and forgive all that had happened and bring both the groups in the Congress, one led by him and the other by Ramachar and Ramakrishna Rao, together, so that Hyderabad might prosper. This cost me his friendship. He went to Hyderabad and expelled about 500 Congressmen of the Ramachar-Ramakrishna Rao group.

Some of the army officers were very much annoyed with me. They had expected that, now that they had got into action, they would crash into Hyderabad, remove the Nizam and make an end of the whole regime. They felt that it was my foolish advice to the Nizam to surrender that had prevented them from fulfilling their programme.

Once the military administration was set up in September, the Agent-General's officers and staff came to be treated as not only entirely superfluous and useless but almost a hostile organisation. Immediately after I left for Bombay, my car was commandeered. The beautiful library, the costly furniture and the household equipment together with articles of historical and cultural value which were in *Dakshina Sadan* and the Agent-General's office were removed at short notice and dumped in a few small rooms of the main Residency building.

I was glad that before the Police Action I had taken the

precaution of sending some articles of historic value, records and other books, to the National Archives through the Southern Command.

The risks and agonies which my staff had gone through between January and September came to be looked upon as insignificant. I had written repeatedly to Sardar that it had done particularly good work and deserved recognition, but I was eliminated from the scene by sudden illness and what I had written about it remained in the archives of the States Ministry.

The telephone between *Dakshina Sadan* and my house in Bombay, used by my Secretary in Secunderabad to enquire about my health, was tapped; an appropriate return for the sins I had committed!

My staff had been living in a sort of camp in the midst of risk and hatred. They had had reasons to expect that when the Government of India took charge of Hyderabad, they, as having held posts of dangers, would receive some appreciation. But when I met the members of my staff later, my heart was rent with pain. The new authorities in Hyderabad had looked upon my staff as almost hostile aliens and those who were in Hyderabad were left to shift for themselves.

Whatever the causes of the estrangement between the new administration and my Secretary, and whatever my Secretary's share in this estrangement, it must be said that from the very beginning my staff was never taken into confidence about the new arrangement, nor were they treated as part of the Government of India set-up which came to rule Hyderabad after the Police Action. There were no orders to close the Agent-General's office. The officers, therefore, could not leave it, and most of them passed through an agony of humiliation for days.

Major Nanda, the military intelligence officer, had done good work, while Major Singh whose services, in my opinion, were superior to those of any Indian Military officer who came into Hyderabad with the Army, deserved recognition. Venkatavardhan, the intelligence officer, had done the most valuable work and faced the greatest risks of them all.

With the Agent-General cut-off from the world by fever, all of them were the waifs and strays of the Government of India. Major Nanda's deputation to me as the Agent-General

was, I understand, treated as civil employment. Major Singh was sent back to his regiment. I wrote to Sardar and the States and Defence Ministries again and again that their services should not go unappreciated, but nothing happened.

In January, 1948, the staff of the Agent-General's office was forced by the Nizam's Government to quit the premises they had been occupying near the Hyderabad Residency. I had, therefore, accommodated them somehow in the military barracks at Bolarum then at my disposal. After the Police Action the Agent-General's office was shifted back to the Residency and the Improvement Board re-allotted the old premises to the Agent-General's staff and promised to hand them over on October 17.

In November the allotment order in favour of the staff was cancelled. On November 10, members of the staff sent a piteous telegram to me: 'Meanwhile the State now headed by the Military Governor has passed orders depriving the Agent-General's staff of the residence, staff quarters to which they were expected to move on the 17th by allotting them to the police. State perhaps justify action on newspaper reports about closing down our office and ignoring possible retention of residuary office and Treasury. This action has caused disappointment to the staff who have already suffered all these months...'

I interceded with the States Ministry on behalf of the staff and I am glad to say that it came to their rescue.

I wrote to the States Ministry to take into account the services rendered by several members of my staff at a critical time. I had often to intervene on behalf of some of them by writing letters or by personal approach to those in authority.

On returning from Matheran after my convalescence, I saw Sardar. I told him how bitterly I felt the treatment that had been meted out to my staff.

In the meantime, some newspapers made wild and reckless allegations against me. My wife, annoyed at such attacks, wrote a letter to Sardar, to which he replied on October 8.

My dear Lilavatihehn,

Your letter of the 5th to hand. I have also received the cuttings of the newspapers which you sent with it. These papers very often make wild attacks on me. We should not take notice of such attacks. Whoever does any public work will always find someone or the other ready to speak evil of him. We should not be annoyed at this. So long as we work honestly, no such

criticism is likely to hurt. Therefore, you should not worry in any way.

On November 6, I sent in my resignation of the office of Agent-General.

In reply to my resignation Sardar wrote to me:

I am writing to acknowledge receipt of your letter dated the 6th November, in which you have tendered resignation of your office as Agent-General for India in Hyderabad. The Government of India are pleased to accept your resignation, which, we propose, may take effect from the 15th November, 1948.

You accepted the office of Agent-General at a time when the relations between Hyderabad and India were very strained and you worked unremittingly and with single-minded devotion to duty and at very great personal sacrifice to bring the Hyderabad problem to a successful conclusion. The ten months during which you held the office of Agent-General have been a momentous period in the history of Hyderabad and India. On behalf of the Government, I wish to say that we are deeply conscious of the high sense of public duty that induced you to accept this office and the very able manner in which you discharged the duties entrusted to you, which contributed in no small measure to the final result.

V. P. Menon mentioned to me that I should write a report of my mission to Hyderabad, which the Government of India would publish. I told Sardar that if the report which I had submitted on the 10th were to be published, it would only be a disconnected document and that I would prefer to write my memoirs in my own way.

On November 21, the States Ministry issued the following Press Note:

Sri K. M. Munshi has tendered resignation of his office of Agent-General to the Government of India in Hyderabad and in the changed circumstances the Government of India have accepted the resignation, with effect from the 15th November 1948. Sri Munshi accepted the office of Agent-General in an honorary capacity at a critical stage in the relations between Hyderabad and India and he worked unremittingly and with single-minded devotion to duty and at very great personal sacrifice to bring the Hyderabad problem to a successful conclusion. The Government of India wish to place on record their deep appreciation of the high sense of public duty that induced Sri Munshi to accept this office and the very able manner in which he discharged the duties entrusted to him.

When I went to Delhi about November 19, my friends were exceedingly nice about what I had done and how I had suffered, but in certain quarters I sensed hostility. According to them, I had done something very wrong. I asked Sardar about it: 'What have I done that I should be treated by these people as if I have been guilty of a gross offence in helping the liquidation of the Ittehad in Hyderabad?'

Sardar laughed. 'Some of them are angry that you helped in liquidating the Ittehad power. Some others are angry that you did not allow them to remove the Nizam from Hyderabad straightaway. Some cannot vent their anger on me, and therefore make you the target.'

My mission in Hyderabad, though diplomatic in designation, was not a normal diplomatic assignment. It arose from a specific agreement which vested jurisdiction in the Union over Defence, External Affairs and Communications. On behalf of the Union, therefore, I had to see that the Nizam's Government discharged its part of the agreement faithfully, and conducted itself consistently with its provisions. My role could not therefore be that of a silent gazer of the Hyderabad skies. Pakistan and Pro-Pakistan intrigues, the moves for independence by the Nizam and the Ittehad, attempts to augment their armed forces and plans for interfering with communications—all these manoeuvres, I had to counteract in an active manner to the extent I could, without any direct participation in overt measures. In the wider context of defence, internal order and security, I had also to reckon with the atrocities of the Razakars as well as of the Communists.

From the very moment of my arrival in Hyderabad I encountered the hostility of the Nizam's Government which increased in intensity as the months passed by. My path therefore bristled with unexpected difficulties. In these circumstances I could have chosen to play a comfortable role and to content myself with spreading good cheer all around. But that would have been at the sacrifice of the country and by betraying the trust and confidence reposed in me; that would have been foreign to my conception of public duty. The background of my life, the training I had received under Gandhiji and the faith which Sardar and the Government of India had placed in me rendered any course other than the one I took impossible.

The bulk of the people of Hyderabad wanted to share the freedom which their brethren in the rest of India had gained. India, again, could not have survived with an independent and hostile Hyderabad anchored to Pakistan. To expect me with such high stakes to remain a mere passive spectator of the nefarious activities of the Razakar fascists on the one hand and the ruthless Communists on the other, both of whom were a serious threat to the security of India, would have been the height of absurdity.

I did not want to run away from my duty. Sometimes, I was weak enough to feel that I should get away from this job, but never for a long time. I felt that if I was not wanted, Sardar who called me to this office should recall me; if he did not, I had only to do what I thought was right and of which I kept him fully informed day after day, sometimes, even twice a day.

With my limited capacity and the many handicaps under which I laboured, I did my best in the way I knew how and the way I could. All my actions were guided by the demands of Indian Unity, which I always kept before me. And in all humility I carried out the mandate, I felt, God had given me.

My greatest solace during these days was that I continued to enjoy the confidence of Sardar.

To another letter of my wife, who had grown very sensitive about the newspaper attacks, Sardar replied on November 30:

Public workers should be thick-skinned. We should not care for dishonest critics and scandal-mongers. We should not feel even hurt at what they do. Even Gandhiji did not escape from such attacks. No one has been able to eliminate wicked people from the world. There is no reason to believe that whatever we do should be approved by everyone. We should not feel agitated at the comments of those who deliberately make false allegations. They may not like what we do. They may be displeased with us or they may have some other reasons. Whether our work is appreciated or not, if the work is truly and honestly done, it will speak for itself. I would, therefore, ask you not to worry.

At the same time, I felt disgusted at the way I was treated by some people after the Hyderabad episode. Soon after, Sri Gopinath Bardoloi, the then Chief Minister of Assam, with Sardar's consent, approached me to accept the Governorship of that State. I declined. I made it clear to Sardar that I had decided to resume my interrupted work in the Constituent

Assembly, and once the Constitution was adopted, to go back to my profession.

Sardar also felt deeply hurt that I should have been allowed to sink into oblivion; perhaps he felt more acutely than I did. For in moments of disappointment, my faith in God always stood by me. I submitted to what I thought was the will of God that my usefulness to the country should end with the Hyderabad episode.

But He willed it otherwise.

CHAPTER XXXV

EPILOGUE : THE END OF AN ERA

WHEN the Indian troops entered Secunderabad on September 18, 1948, the population was stricken by fear. The State was empty of all beneficent activities and law and order simply did not exist. The administrative machinery, which had been inextricably mixed up with the Razakar movement, had completely collapsed. The budget of the preceding year showed a deficit of no less than eight crores.

As a result of the Police Action, the face of South India was changed. Normal conditions were restored in Hyderabad and the surrounding States. Business immediately resumed its natural course and the restrictions imposed by the Nizam's Government on the free flow of trade were removed. The public services were opened to merit determined by open competitive tests.

The Communist menace in the Nalgonda and Warangal districts necessitated large-scale operations by the Army and the special police from India which lasted for about four years. They were supplemented by intensive propaganda, repeated conferences, the establishment of new villages, the making of roads and the opening up of the jungles in which the Communists had dug themselves in.

A very serious situation had been created by the Nizam's policy of attracting Muslims from other parts of India to swell the local Muslim population. The activities of the Razakars and the Communists had forced the Hindus in many parts of the State to flee to the neighbouring Indian provinces. Many Muslims of the State had also migrated to other parts of India out of sheer panic. To this was added the difficulties arising out of the vast devastations which had been wrought by the Razakars and the Communists.

The problems created by this situation had to be solved with great care. The Muslims from other parts of the Union were sent back to the Provinces and the Hindus who had fled from their homes, were given facilities to return to them. The Muslims who had suffered during the crisis, were resettled and

taccavi loans were given to the farmers to cultivate lands which had been left fallow. Students who had lost their parents were provided with scholarships. Stipends were given to the widows of those who had been killed and pensions were awarded to their incapacitated dependents. Aid was given to the helpless for getting their children married, housing materials were supplied for the rebuilding or repair of houses damaged by the Razakars and the Communists, and whatever property looted by them was recovered and restored to their owners. Moreover, hundreds of political detenus, who had been rotting in prison for months without trial, were released.

Land reform on modern lines was immediately undertaken and *sarf-i-khas*, the main source of the Nizam's terrible power, was taken over. Its merger into the democratically governed Hyderabad, marked the end of the most anachronistic system of land ownership in the country; 1,500 jagirs, comprising 6,500 villages and covering a third of the area of the State, were abolished.

The apparatus of a modern and free State was progressively set up, at first under the Military Governor and then under a Council of Ministers. With the ushering in of the Indian Constitution on January 26, 1950, Hyderabad became a B State of the Indian Union with the Nizam as the Rajpramukh, its constitutional head. Early in 1952, the first General Elections set up a Legislature in the State, elected on the basis of adult franchise with a Government responsible to it.

The First Five Year Plan was introduced in Hyderabad together with the rest of the country. Over thirty irrigation projects were taken on hand; thirty-four Development Blocks, covering 4,000 villages and involving a population of three million, were set up; power-projects were launched and co-operative movements were inaugurated. A movement to afforest the eroded lands was started and facilities for public health and medical aid multiplied.

Hindi and the regional languages were placed on a footing of equality with Urdu and every village with a population of 5,000 or over, was provided with a school. The Osmania University ceased to be a hot-house for breeding fanatic conquistadors and began to function as a normal Indian University without any communal bias.

As normal conditions prevailed, the Police budget was considerably reduced.

On November 1, 1956, the old State of Hyderabad, the last vestige of the Mughal Empire, was dissolved. Its Telugu, Marathi and Kannada speaking subjects were joined to the people homogeneous to them in language and social structure in the neighbouring States.

But for the Police Action, none of this would have been possible.

From a long term point of view, the collapse of Hyderabad was a significant event in the history of India, for the Nizam's rule was the last and the most outworn relic of the Mughal Empire.

The Nizams would have been thrown on the scrap-heap of history by the Marathas long before the end of the 18th century, had not the East India Company maintained them in its own interest. After 1857, the British Crown kept them, together with other Indian princes, in power as a potential reservoir of strength in the event of a country-wide anti-British outburst. Later, the Nizams were the most glittering pendants to the Imperial Crown, as also counter-weights against militant nationalism. The Nizam's Hyderabad had, therefore, survived because the British rulers were interested in maintaining them, though the people of the State had to pay a heavy price for it.

As we saw before, the Nizam was permitted to function as an irresponsible potentate in matters of internal administration; in this respect, he was subject only to the control of the British Resident, and through him, of the Governor-General. He maintained his hold over the State because of the enormous wealth which he had collected and with the help of a subservient feudal order, as also with the support of the Muslim community which had a vested interest in maintaining a pro-Muslim rule. When freedom was in the offing, Nizam Osman VII. to serve his own ends, began exploiting communal tension. He exercised his power with the aid of a vast array of the weapons which had been at the disposal only of medieval royalty: patronage, arbitrary power, espionage, intrigue, vast resources and religious fanaticism.

In the pre-British days, the urban Muslims, mostly

the descendants of local converts, had developed a conquistador outlook towards the Hindus. This was challenged by the Hindus who developed a fierce consciousness of their superiority in race, religion and social purity. As a result, the Muslims looked upon Hindus as weak and cowardly. The Hindus, bullied or coerced into humiliating submissions, harboured a smouldering resentment.

During the British regime, the Hindus, being more adaptable, acquired wealth, position and prestige. The rule of law and the equality which they enjoyed before the law also gave scope to their intelligence and power of organization. They were, therefore, able to challenge the conquistador spirit of the Muslims in various parts of India by corresponding aggressiveness.

If the Muslims tried to consolidate their community and strengthen it by converting Hindus to Islam, the Hindus reacted by similar movements of *sangathan* and *shuddhi*. If the Muslims Arabicised Urdu, the Hindus Sanskritized Hindi. When the Muslims tried to retain their ancestral memory as the conquerors of India, the Hindu racial memory reverted to the glory of the pre-Muslim period or to the heroic deeds of those who fought the Muslim invaders in the Era of Resistance.

In the name of religion, the Muslims insisted on their right to carry the sacrificial cow on the public roads. At the same time they denied the Hindus the right to play music on public roads before the mosques. The Hindus resisted. Hindu-Muslim riots followed.

But the new Indian nationalism soon became a powerful force. It was a composite sentiment based upon the Western concept of nationalism, as also upon the Hindu attitude towards India as the sacred Motherland. This new force brought an overwhelming majority of Hindus and a small section of Muslims together in the struggle to fight foreign domination. However, there were large sections of Muslims who were not able to share this group consciousness with the rest of India. They, therefore, challenged the very idea of Indians being a single nation. Communal separativeness, enforced at all costs, thus became a challenge to Indian nationalism.

The Indian National Congress, the architect as well as the instrument of Indian nationalism, was for several decades

dominated by Mahatma Gandhi and his devoted band of followers, both Hindus and Muslims. It exercised great self-restraint. But for it, Muslim separativeness would have led to the growth of fierce Hindu aggressiveness.

When the transfer of power from the British to Indian hands became a clear possibility, the separativeness which dominated certain sections of Muslims found expression in growing demands. They wanted separate electorates; communal weightage; then, a balance of Hindu-Muslim provinces in the Federal government; later, a claim to equality of representation with the Hindu community. In this way they blocked the progress towards freedom for several years. Ultimately, when freedom was at hand, this separativeness took the shape of a blunt refusal to live in the same country and a determination to establish a separate homeland.

The Indian revolution was principally backed by moral forces. Naturally therefore, national India could not be a party to retaining the areas predominantly occupied by Muslims against their wishes.

When the Mughal Empire was disintegrating, whatever dignity and power the Nizams possessed was upheld by an aristocracy composed of Muslims and Hindus. When the Nizams found themselves weak against the Paramount Power, they also found that they could develop internal strength only by uniting or parting the two communities and producing shifting alliances as the occasion demanded. In this game of maintaining a balance of power, the Nizams often found the Hindus more dependable. This earned for the Nizams the reputation of being fair to both the communities.

But with Muslim separativeness growing in strength in the rest of India, these old traditions were soon forgotten.

Hyderabad was the largest State in the country, with Osman VII at its head, a ruler anxious to draw strength from Muslim communalism to maintain his autocracy. Muslim adventurers from outside the State and even from abroad were, therefore, attracted to the State. Many of these new entrants to the civil and military services had no local associations, and looked upon the Hindus as inferior aliens. As a result, once the Nizam decided to become the Head of an Islamic State, the fanatics of the North who held power in the State emerged as a source of strength. During the decades of communal ten-

sion in the country, these elements became ardent protagonists of the policies of the Muslim League.

Once Pakistan was conceded and the Congress installed in office at New Delhi, communal fanaticism lost its hold over vast sections of the Hindus. The fanatic impulse among most of the Muslims who remained in India was also curbed, at least on the surface.

But these new developments created little impression on the North Indian Muslims of Hyderabad. Like the Bourbons and Stuarts, they never learnt or unlearnt anything. The Ittehad, inspired and dominated mostly by the Indian Muslims, was also aided by local adventurers. Its natural ambition, therefore, was to build a modern fascist centre of communal aggressiveness in India on the crumbling edifice of the State. Kasim Razvi was their voice. Their object, scarcely concealed, was to establish Islamic domination, with or without the aid of Pakistan, first of Hyderabad, then of the South and ultimately of the whole of India.

Had this attempt succeeded, it would have precipitated so powerful a Hindu sentiment as to have spelt the end of a free democracy in India. It would have also arrested its march towards a modern democratic State. The end of the Ittehad, therefore, served to bury this potential catastrophe once for all.

In Hyderabad the communal problem became mixed with the problem of Indian Princes. I think Professor Coupland was the first to draw the distinction between the two problems. The communal problem related to the Muslims sharing power with the Hindus under one Central Government. The problem of the Princes revolved round the fate and position of the ruling dynasties after the States were integrated. The Nizam's bid for independence was the product of the problem of the Princes.

For many years, the Nizam had been hypnotized by the British into the belief that he had a special position in India. He was, therefore, anxious to maintain that position and perpetuate his dynastic rule. According to Campbell-Johnson, the Nizam was reported to have said that the fate and policy of the other Princes in India were no concern of his and that he regarded them as noblemen to whom certain courtesies were due. This attitude showed the Nizam's lack of realism. The Indian States system, created by the British, was one and indivisible: it drew no distinction between the big and small

rulers. But the Nizam lived in bye-gone times when the Mughal Emperors called the ancient rulers of Rajasthan mere zamindars!

If the Nizam had little realism, he had less knowledge of history. He could never realize that Hyderabad owed its birth to the turmoil of 18th century politics in India; its continued existence, to spoon-feeding by the foreign power. When he saw that the British had decided to withdraw from the country, he thought that he could easily fill the vacuum of power by communal fascism, with himself as its head and symbol.

Throughout the eighteen months during which India was being integrated, the Nizam was the master of the situation in Hyderabad, except during the last few days before the Police Action. The delegations which went to and fro, the pinch-beck Feuhrer and his Razakars, the Laik Ali Ministry and the army, only played their allotted part in an orchestra, of which the Nizam himself was the conductor.

No doubt, the personalities of Kasim Razvi, Laik Ali, Moin Nawaz Jung and others cannot be forgotten. However, neither the part they played nor the communal aspect should be allowed to overshadow the reality of the situation. It was a game of power politics, in which a medieval dynasty struggled to survive the revolutionary changes in India. The communal and religious factors were only brought into play to help the Nizam in carrying on the struggle.

When viewed in the context of the process which transformed India into a free and united nation, the Hyderabad episode was an unhappy one; in a sense, it was disgraceful. During this process, a large number of Indian Princes, spurred on by patriotism, or prompted by a sense of the inevitable, made great sacrifices and came out unscathed from the ordeal. For some of them, like the rulers of Udaipur, Bikaner, Jodhpur, Mysore, Baroda and Jaipur and their advisers, history would have nothing but undiluted admiration. Had they stood out, India's destiny would have been frustrated. Of them all, the Nizam alone could not stand the test, and in the dying struggle of an institution which was doomed to death, he went down before the inevitable forces of the history.

If Hyderabad had remained unintegrated with the rest of India, the country would have felt outraged. The communal fascism of the Ittehad would have developed into a civil war between the communities. The Muslims of India, who had been

accepted as an integral part of our democratic society, would have come to be looked upon as hostiles.

If the Police Action had been delayed, the egregious insolence of the Razvi group would have grown to formidable dimensions. The Hindus would have been forced into the arms of the Communists. The ferment would have spread not only in the border districts of the three surrounding States, but in the whole of the South. Peace and security would have been endangered and Communist infiltration made easy.

In India's onward march to national solidarity, the integration of the Princely States was only a milestone. The Nizam and the Ittehad barred the way. In utter disregard of the forces which were leading to the consolidation of the nation, they hoped to isolate the people of the State by mobilising communal fanaticism.

When Hyderabad collapsed in September 1948, parochialism as well as communalists lost their last armed battle.

By the Police Action, the people of India not only met an internal challenge; they fulfilled the destiny which had been denied to them by the accidents of history.

With the close of the Hyderabad episode, therefore, an era came to an end.

APPENDIX I

Standstill Agreement dated November 29, 1947 signed by the Indian Union and Hyderabad.

Agreement made this twenty-ninth day of November Nineteen Hundred and Forty-seven between the Dominion of India and the Nizam of Hyderabad and Berar.

Whereas it is the aim and policy of the Dominion of India and the Nizam of Hyderabad and Berar to work together in close association and amity for the mutual benefit of both, but a final agreement as to the form and nature of the relationship between them has not yet been reached.

And whereas it is to the advantage of both parties that existing agreement and administrative arrangements in matters of common concern should, pending such final agreement as aforesaid, be continued;

Now, therefore, it is hereby agreed as follows:—

Article 1.—Until new agreements in this behalf are made, all agreements and administrative arrangements as to the matters of common concern, including External Affairs, Defence and Communications, which were existing between the Crown and the Nizam immediately before the 15th August, 1947 shall, in so far as may be appropriate, continue as between the Dominion of India (or any part thereof) and the Nizam.

Nothing herein contained shall impose any obligation or confer any right on the Dominion:

- (i) to send troops to assist the Nizam in the maintenance of internal order,
- (ii) to station troops in Hyderabad territory except in time of war and with the consent of the Nizam which will not be unreasonably withheld; any troops so stationed to be withdrawn from Hyderabad territory within 6 months of the termination of hostilities.

Article 2.—The Government of India and the Nizam agree for the better execution of the purpose of this Agreement to appoint Agents in Hyderabad and Delhi respectively, and to give every facility to them for the discharge of their functions.

Article 3.—(i) Nothing herein contained shall include or introduce paramountcy functions or create any paramountcy relationship.

(ii) Nothing herein contained and nothing done in pursuance hereof shall be deemed to create in favour of either party any right continuing after the date of termination of this agreement, and nothing herein contained and nothing done in pursuance hereof shall be deemed to derogate from any right which, but for this agreement, would have been exercisable by either party to it after the date of termination hereof.

Article 4.—Any dispute arising out of this agreement or out of agreements or arrangement hereby continued shall be referred to the arbitration of two arbitrators, one appointed by each of the parties, and an umpire appointed by those arbitrators.

Article 5.—This agreement shall come into force at once and shall remain in force for a period of one year.

In confirmation whereof the Governor-General of India and the Nizam of Hyderabad and Berar have appended their signatures.

APPENDIX II

Letter dated November 29, 1947 from His Exalted Highness the Nizam to His Excellency the Governor-General.

I regret that we have not been able to reach a final agreement as to the eventual nature of the association between Hyderabad and the Dominion of India. As Your Excellency knows, I have not been prepared to contemplate accession to either Dominion, but, short of this, I have been ready to negotiate with your Government upon any other basis. I am now enclosing a Standstill Agreement which I am prepared to execute if Your Excellency's Government are also prepared to sign it. It is a disappointment to me that after such protracted negotiations we are unable to do more for the present than carry on existing arrangements subject to such changes as the departure of paramountcy imposes. On the other hand, it is essential to put an end to the present state of uncertainty and the fact that the Agreement now to be executed is to endure for a year means that both Governments will be able to turn their attention more fully to the problems of administration without constant pre-occupation with the question of our constitutional relationship. To that question we shall eventually have to return, but I am confident that, if during the next year, our association in accordance with the terms of the Standstill Agreement is marked by goodwill on both sides, we shall be more likely at the end of that period to reach a satisfactory agreement as to the nature of our long-term association. I regard this Standstill Agreement accordingly as founded upon the principle of good neighbourliness and I am sure that Your Excellency and your Government will approach it in the same spirit. By executing this Standstill Agreement I am in no way permanently prejudicing my rights as an independent sovereign, but I am of course conscious that I am in some important respects suspending the exercise of certain of these rights during the currency of the agreement.

2. It is plain that an Agreement in this general form will necessitate a good deal of adjustment in regard to particular arrangements. In this connexion I learn that Your Government is prepared as soon as possible to negotiate with mine arrangements for the posts, telegraphs and telephones within Hyderabad to be worked as a Hyderabad system in harmony with the Dominion system. There are, in addition, problems about the Hyderabad Forces, both in regard to the troops and their equipment, which our Government will need to discuss in the light of the fact that on the 15th August, 1947, the Hyderabad Forces and Police available for the maintenance of internal order could no longer rely upon the backing of the troops stationed in and near the State by the Paramount Power. This question has already been discussed with the late Military Adviser-in-Chief and with his successor, and I have no doubt that Your Excellency's

Government will have no objection to making any adjustments in these respects and indeed in other cases of the same character, (having their origin in the exercise of paramountcy functions) which are already apparent or which may come to light in giving effect to the general provision contained in Article I of the Standstill Agreement. So far as arms and equipment are concerned, I understand Your Excellency's Government are ready and willing to provide Hyderabad with the necessary requirements of its Forces and Police. It is only if for any reason the Dominion Government cannot supply such requirements within a reasonable time that I shall approach other sources of supply and then only after previous intimation to your Government.

3. There is also the question which has been much discussed between my Delegation and the representatives of your Government about diplomatic and trade representatives for Hyderabad abroad. I am prepared to execute the Agreement on the understanding that the Government of the Dominion will take no objection to the maintenance of the Hyderabad Agent-General in U.K. or to the appointment of similar representatives in any other country. I shall be prepared to arrange for the complete co-ordination of the work of these representatives with the diplomatic and commercial representatives of the Dominion of India in such countries and to inform you in advance of any representatives whom I may decide to appoint. I am confident that Your Excellency's Government will be equally ready to co-operate with mine in regard to import and export trade of Hyderabad.

4. There are several matters which have been outstanding between us for some time and which I should like to see cleared out of the way as soon as the agreement comes into force:

- (i) No Paramountcy functions remain to be exercised nor was the Hyderabad Residency retained except as a house for the British Resident when there was one in the past. In these circumstances, I should be glad if your Government would now hand it over to Hyderabad. Suitable arrangements can be immediately made about the Treasury and your Treasury Officials.
- (ii) It is urgently necessary that arms, equipment and, in particular, ammunition should be immediately made available to Hyderabad. We have had no supplies since July and the shortage is interfering with the training of the Hyderabad Army.
- (iii) In the same way, there has been difficulty in securing the importation of 'soft' vehicles for the use of the Army and, in the special circumstances of Hyderabad you will appreciate the importance of mobility having regard to the areas to be covered.
- (iv) I understand that the last of the Dominion troops stationed in Hyderabad will be removed in the course of the next month and I shall be glad of confirmation of this matter.
- (v) The transfer to Hyderabad of all jurisdiction within the State was agreed in principle before the 15th August, 1947

and was largely effected before that date and has continued since. There are however some points still outstanding in this regard in relation to Police jurisdiction on the part of the Railways which run through the State. I assume that such jurisdiction will be immediately restored to Hyderabad.

5. It is of course manifest that my rights in regard to such matters as currency, coinage and postal rights are in no way impaired by the Standstill Agreement, but I should be glad if Your Excellency would give me an express assurance that the rights to which I have just referred continue undiminished.

6. I should like to take this opportunity of suggesting that, in relation to passports, the Dominion of India should agree, as a matter of convenience in a question which is becoming urgent, to the Chief Secretary of my Government or some other appropriate officer issuing passports to Hyderabad subjects which would be countersigned by the Dominion.

7. I am sure that in entering into this Agreement both our Governments intend to do all they can to prevent subversive movements and propaganda in the territory of the other.

8. I know well Your Excellency's interests in all steps taken to abate communal antagonism. It may therefore be of interest to you to know that, in conformity with earlier declarations on my part, I propose to issue a Firman in the immediate future expressing my firm resolve to protect the lives, rights and interests of all my subjects alike, irrespective of caste or creed.

APPENDIX III

Letter dated November 29, 1947 from His Excellency the Governor-General to His Exalted Highness the Nizam.

I acknowledge with thanks the receipt of Your Exalted Highness's letter, dated 29th November and the Agreement. While my Government and I note that Your Exalted Highness has no intention of acceding to Pakistan, we very much regret that you should have been unable to execute an Instrument of Accession with India. Both my Minister for States in his Statement of the 5th July and I myself in my speech of the 25th of July to the representatives of the States have made it clear that it is the earnest desire of the Government of India to maintain the sovereignty of the States and to work with them as full partners in the administration of the three subjects proposed for accession. My Government cordially reciprocate your hope that, given goodwill on both sides, the working of the Standstill Agreement will provide a basis for a satisfactory long-term solution. Placed as Hyderabad is, its interests are inextricably bound up with those of India; and my Government hope that before the present agreement expires, it will be possible for Hyderabad to accede to the Dominion of India.

2. My Government will be prepared to discuss with your representative as soon as possible the question of handing over the posts, telegraphs and telephones; and also the future strength and equipment of the Hyderabad Forces.

As regards the supply of arms and equipment, the Dominion Government will be able to supply your legitimate requirements.

3. My Government have no objection to your maintaining an Agent-General in London and appointing similar representatives elsewhere, if necessary. In this connexion they are very glad to have your assurance, to which you will appreciate that the Government of India attach great importance, that the activities of such representatives will be fully co-ordinated with those of the representatives of the Dominion of India and will be confined to matters properly relating to trade and commerce.

The Government of India are certainly prepared to co-operate with Hyderabad fully in regard to its import and export trade.

4. As regards the points raised in paragraph 4 of your letter, my Government have authorised me to say as follows:—

- (1) My Government gladly agree that the Residency buildings at Hyderabad will be returned to your Government as soon as alternative accommodation promised by you is made available for our Treasury and officials employed there.
- (2) My Government will take the necessary action in regard to the early supply of arms and ammunition for which an indent has been received from your Government.

- (3) My Government will help your Government in securing the vehicles that they require.
- (4) It is the definite intention of my Government that the troops at present stationed inside Hyderabad territory should be progressively withdrawn according to an agreed programme and that the withdrawal should be completed by the end of February 1948 at the latest.
- (5) On the points remaining to be settled regarding the retrocession of jurisdiction, these can be discussed with my Government by your representative as soon as he is appointed.
5. I am authorised to assure Your Exalted Highness that your rights in regard to currency, coinage and postal matters will in no way be impaired by the standstill agreement.
6. My Government will take up the question of passports mentioned in paragraph 6 of your letter. They are fully prepared to assist you in this respect.
7. With reference to paragraphs 7 and 8 of your letter, the Government of India desire to assure Your Exalted Highness that it is their earnest desire to promote communal harmony and to maintain peace and security and they will co-operate wholeheartedly with you to that end.
8. I enclose the agreement duly signed by me.

APPENDIX IV

Statement dated November 29, 1947, in the Indian Parliament by Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel, Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for States.

With your permission, Sir, I should like to make a statement on the result of the negotiations with the Hyderabad Government on the future relationship between that State and the Government of India. The House will recall that I stated on the floor of this House that this was the last phase of these negotiations. I am happy to say that an agreement has been reached and I lay on the table of the House a copy of the Agreement, signed this morning, as well as a copy of the collateral letters exchanged between H.E.H. and H.E. the Governor-General.

As the House is aware, it was in July last that we initiated negotiations with the States for their accession to the Dominion of India, which, due to the spirit of co-operation evinced by the Rulers, resulted in the accession before the 15th August of all States except Hyderabad, Kashmir and Junagadh. We had negotiations with representatives of His Exalted Highness the Nizam at the same time. I do not wish to take the House through the many phases of the negotiations. I need only say that when 15th August came no agreement could be reached. At the same time, His Exalted Highness the Nizam was anxious not to break off negotiations and accordingly at his request we decided to give him an extension of two months within which to finalise his attitude when the negotiations were resumed. His Excellency the Governor-General, with the concurrence of the Cabinet, undertook to continue them on our behalf. He had several meetings with the Delegation sent by His Exalted Highness, and about a month ago a complete agreement had resulted but owing to developments of which the House is aware, the old Delegation resigned and a new one was sent by His Exalted Highness the Nizam in its place. During the negotiations with the new Delegation, we adhered to the stand we had already taken and finally the agreement, which we have now succeeded in obtaining from the present Delegation, is exactly the same as we had negotiated with the old one.

Under this settlement, all agreements and administrative arrangements on matters of common concern, which formerly existed between the Crown Representative and the Hyderabad State, except the Paramountcy function, are to be continued as between the Government of India and the Hyderabad State for a period of one year. These agreements and arrangements cover a wide variety of matters including the three subjects on which accession of all the States has been accepted, viz. Defence, External Affairs and Communications.

I know that Hon'ble Members would have been much more gratified if, as a result of these talks, His Exalted Highness had found it possible for the State of Hyderabad permanently to accede to the Indian Dominion. We, however, fully appreciated the internal difficulties in the State and consistent with our policy to secure agreement, not by coercion, but, as far as possible, with the maximum degree of goodwill on both sides and with due regard to the overall position in India, we felt that an agreement of this nature, even for a limited period, would have considerable advantages over the absence of any agreement whatsoever. The period of one year would enable both of us to forge closer relations and would, it is hoped, pave the way for a permanent accession.

The settlement makes it clear that Hyderabad does not propose to accede to Pakistan. This, if I may say so, is only right, for, placed as Hyderabad is, its destiny is inextricably bound up with that of India.

I fully realise that Hon'ble Members of this House as well as the Public outside have been considerably concerned over the happenings in the State in recent months. Now that accord has been reached, I am sure it will have a wholesome effect on the existing situation and will exercise a beneficial influence on the relations between the two communities, both in the State and outside. We can thus put these happenings back in the past and look forward to a relationship in which amity and cordiality will prevail. An atmosphere will thus be created which will enable people who have left the State to return to their homes. I am also certain that as this settlement is intended to serve as the basis of friendly and cordial relations, it will be worked in that spirit. We on our part will do our best to secure this end.

I would also like to refer briefly to the fact that proposals for constitutional reforms are now engaging the attention of His Exalted Highness. On this, as well as on the question of final accession, I hope he will readily agree that in the ultimate analysis it is the will of the people that should guide his judgment. There are unmistakable signs in several other States of the triumph of this principle and I feel certain that His Exalted Highness will, as becomes a Ruler of his pre-eminent position, set an example which others can follow.

Finally, I am sure the House would like me to place on record our sense of appreciation of all that His Excellency the Governor-General has done in bringing about such a happy conclusion to the prolonged negotiations.

APPENDIX V

Letter dated February 28, 1948 from Shri K. M. Munshi, Agent-General of the Government of India in Hyderabad to Mir Lalk Ali, Prime Minister of Hyderabad.

I have read the note sent to my Secretary, on the Defence Agreements and Arrangements existing on the 15th August, 1947, in reply to my D.O. letter No. L.S. 7, dated the 7th February, 1947, addressed to you. I presume that your External Affairs Secretariat had prepared the Note in order that it may serve as a basis for our further talks regarding the scope of the agreements and arrangements.

2. The Note, I must hasten to observe, does not correctly state the constitutional position as it existed before the 15th August, 1947. "The responsibility for the Defence of India including Hyderabad had been vested in the Crown; it was therefore incumbent on the Nizam to co-operate by doing everything required to be done by the Crown as being necessary for the efficient discharge of that responsibility and further by abstaining from every course of action declared dangerous to the common safety or the safety of other States or Provinces. The binding nature of such agreements and arrangements, under which the Crown exercised its rights, responsibilities and jurisdiction in the matter of defence, has been accepted by the Standstill Agreement."

3. Without prejudice to the generality of the constitutional position as stated above, the Indian States Forces Scheme, 1939, which Hyderabad had voluntarily joined, enjoined certain definite rights and obligations on the Crown as well as the State in regard to Defence. I agree that the Scheme was voluntary in that it was in the discretion of the States to join it or not, but I cannot subscribe to the view that once a State joined the Scheme it was open to it to withdraw from it whenever it liked. The power of withdrawal from the Scheme lies entirely in the discretion of the Crown and may be exercised with or without the agreement of the State concerned. I am sure you will agree that, in so far as Hyderabad is bound by the Indian States Forces Scheme, even apart from the obligations flowing from the responsibility which the Government of India has in regard to the Defence of India, the contentions in paragraphs 2 and 6 of the Note that no restriction could be imposed on the strength of the Hyderabad Army, and that information in respect thereof could be supplied merely as a matter of courtesy, could hardly be upheld. As I do not possess information regarding the reservations subject to which Hyderabad joined the Scheme, I am not in a position to appreciate to what extent any of the provisions of the Scheme may be held not to apply.

4. I note that Hyderabad has raised the strength of its Army from 13,660 to 22,393. I would be grateful if the Minutes of the Con-

ference held in July and November, 1946, with the Military Adviser-in-Chief and the Commander-in-Chief in India respectively, to consider the augmentation of the strength of the Hyderabad Army is supplied. But I presume no specific sanction was accorded by the Government of India to the raising of the strength of the Army and, if this presumption be correct, you will agree that the increase in the strength that has been effected remains unauthorised.

5. I fear I remain unimpressed with the claim made in paragraph 11 of the Note for raising the strength of the Hyderabad Army to 60,000 on the ground that such a large force is required for defence. The responsibility for the defence of Hyderabad against external aggression having been transferred to the Dominion Government under the Standstill Agreement, you will agree that no claim for an increase in the State Army can be founded on the plea of the defence of the State against external aggression.

6. As regards Internal Security, I have not so far received the usual Annual Return, long overdue under the old arrangement, showing the present strength, organisation and equipment of the Army, Police and Irregular Forces. I am not therefore in a position to assess their sufficiency or otherwise for purposes of Internal Security or their armament requirements.

7. In this connexion I must point out that the most serious menace to the internal tranquillity of the State and of all the bordering areas is the Ittehad Organisation which thrives mainly on the patronage and support of your Government. Its avowed object is to secure the sovereignty of Hyderabad which, according to its declared doctrines, vests in the Muslim subjects of the Nizam. Its volunteer Force is 1,50,000 strong and its leader, Mr. Kasim Razvi, has recently appealed for stepping up recruitment by 3,50,000 more volunteers. This organisation provides a fertile source of recruitment to the State Army and Police Forces. Its volunteers, Razakars, operate throughout the State in close collaboration with the State Army and Police Forces. They spread a reign of terror amongst the non-Muslim population of the State and it is common knowledge that, although they have been inflicting widespread injury on persons and property, they are generally immune from the processes and penalties of Law. Assisted by the State Police and Military they frequently conduct raids on the neighbouring Provinces of the Dominion. After a close study of the facts and making every allowance for panicky reports, I have been driven to the conclusion—and I have no doubt any impartial tribunal will equally come to the same conclusion—that the Razakars are a Private Army operating in the State with the active aid and co-operation of the present Government; that they are a principal contributory factor to the general insecurity prevailing not only in Hyderabad but also in the neighbouring Provinces; and that they therefore constitute a threat to the security of India, which is a matter of common concern to the Government of India and the Nizam's Government.

8. My conclusion is more than justified by the professed aim of the Razakar activities as openly announced by Kasim Razvi, the

President of the Ittehad-ul-Muslimin in no uncertain terms. The President of the Ittehad-ul-Muslimin has appealed for 5 lakhs of Razakars. He has stated that women are also being prepared for a fight on the borders of Hyderabad, which necessarily implies a war with India. He has openly declared again and again that Hyderabad is an Islamic State and the sovereignty therein vests in the Muslims of Hyderabad. He has called upon the Razakars to liberate the Muslims of India from the Government of India and has charged my Government with supplying arms to those who carry on violent political activities in Hyderabad. These pronouncements, coming as they do from the President of the Party to which a majority of the Ministers in your present Government owe allegiance, are calculated to inflame the Muslims of the State and in the whole of India against the non-Muslims and the Dominion of India.

9. Although by my letter No. D-6/L.4/7, dated the 11th February, 1948, I protested that the attacks on the Government of India should be stopped, I have been vouchsafed no reply. The activities of the Razakars are proving so serious a menace to the tranquillity of South India as would, in my opinion, attract the Defence Power of the Dominion Government. I am sure, however, that you will agree with me that every possible endeavour should be made to obviate the need of invoking it.

10. I should therefore like to have your assurance that, in the interest of the security of India, your Government will be willing to co-operate with the Government of India by withholding all aid to the Ittehad-ul-Muslimin organisation so as to incapacitate its Razakars from proving a menace to the security and tranquillity of India and, if the Government of India so desire, banning the organisation altogether, as has been done in the case of the R.S.S. organisation in the Provinces and States of India.

11. As regards the supply of arms and equipment mentioned in paragraph 12 of the Note, you will agree that the whole question of Defence under the Standstill Agreement being indivisible is not susceptible of piecemeal treatment. As soon as a satisfactory settlement is reached in respect of all outstanding matters relating to Defence, I have no hesitation in assuring you that the Union Government will supply all the arms and equipments required for such Security Services as are essential, in so far as the supply position will permit.

12. I have set out my tentative views above with a view to facilitate further talks on the subject, and I should be grateful for an early reply and I will always appreciate an early opportunity of discussing with you the Defence Agreements and Arrangements under the Standstill Agreement in order that we may be able to pave the way for successful talks at Delhi.

APPENDIX VI

Letter dated February 29, 1948 from Shri K. M. Munshi to Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel.

In this letter, I propose to give an appraisal of the economic position of Hyderabad. The attempt to control the exchange manipulation (*vide* my letter to Mr. Menon on the proposed Currency Ordinance, dated February 28, 1948), the insistence on Trade Agents in foreign countries and the right to receive hard currency for Hyderabad equivalent to its exportable surplus (*vide* minutes of my discussion with Laik Ali on Standstill Agreement) are part of a well-planned scheme to make Hyderabad economically sovereign and so powerful as to make India's position difficult. In future settlement, the economic factors should not be lost sight of.

2. Exports and Imports.—Appendix 'A' gives my appraisal of the export and import position of Hyderabad. The figures are taken from notes of official records of the State and can be relied upon as showing their latest estimates of their resources.

3. Recently the Nizam's Government have imposed a ban on the export of groundnuts. That has largely affected the markets in India; whereas the Nizam's Government is practically taking the stocks at a relatively low market price, as a first step towards conserving its exportable surplus to secure sterling or hard currency.

The Appendix indicates the nature of economic pressure which we can bring in case of an emergency. But Hyderabad Civil Service is a very efficient one; Mr. Laik Ali's ambition is economic self-sufficiency and power more than political monopoly for Muslims. A well-planned scheme is being pursued in this matter. Possibly six months more, and these economic sanctions will lose their efficiency.

4. Railways.—For all imports from the rest of India and from overseas, Hyderabad is dependent upon Indian Railways. On the other hand, some very important traffic between several parts of India passes through Hyderabad. Hyderabad cannot altogether cut off any part of India from another part, but it can create difficulties, as routes connecting the South with the rest of India may become very circuitous. The traffic between Northern India and Southern India (Delhi to Madras), between Western India and Eastern India (Bombay to Madras and Goa to Masulipatam) passes mostly through Hyderabad. Hyderabad proposes to rely upon this factor as a bargaining factor for obtaining reciprocal transport arrangement and the right to import from, and export to, foreign countries directly. If transport reciprocity is denied, Hyderabad cannot resist. As a matter of fact, the ban on imports put by Madras and Bombay has been largely responsible for their present (un?) friendly attitude.

5. The Deccan Airways.—The Deccan Airways is, and is rightly,

considered by the Nizam's Government as its lifeline of sovereignty. When it suits them, they claim that it is a foreign service. It runs across India from Delhi to Bangalore and Madras connecting North and South India. It is planning to contact Karachi and Chittagong for securing essential imports. It is run by the State but there is a scheme for its nationalization, so that even the minority shares held by Tatas and others may be taken over.

6. Aerodromes.—Handing over of the Hakimpet Aerodrome to the Nizam's Government has been a blow to our control of communications. Hyderabad is building four other aerodromes. Government of India only controls the Wireless Station, though I am informed that messages are sent out to Karachi from the Station. On other papers I have advised that the Government of India should strengthen its inspection powers of these aerodromes.

7. Claims to Territorial Sovereignty.—Pursuant to the sanction given by you to my proposal, I contacted the Hon'ble Rafi Ahmad Kidwai, Communications Minister, whose prompt action enabled an Indian Company—whose application was in his file, the Indian Overseas Airways, Ltd.,—to secure a license. But there was resistance. I am sorry to say, from the heads of his department, who, in spite of the political importance of this matter, were very reluctant. The license was, however, obtained; the service was opened on 28th February, 1948. As a result, Hyderabad Government naturally was seriously perturbed. They have sent protests. Moin Nawaz Jung told me that their territorial sovereignty was infringed. If the claim to territorial sovereignty is admitted, our control over communications would disappear.

8. Central Control of Communications.—I may draw your attention to the supreme importance of retaining control of All-India Communications:

- (a) Deccan Airways should not be permitted to treat itself as a foreign line, nor Hyderabad aerodrome be allowed to be treated as ports over which the Centre has no control.
- (b) Deccan Airways should not be allowed to go beyond Indian frontiers.
- (c) The monopoly of Deccan Airways in and over Hyderabad territory must not be permitted.

It would, therefore, be better if this matter be taken up at your level with the Hon'ble Rafi Ahmad Kidwai so that the policy can be determined. Otherwise his department will create difficulties.

9. Independent International Trade Arrangements.—The Nizam's Government has, with frantic speed, launched a programme—

- (a) to building up reserves and stocks as soon as possible in order to face any short-range crisis:
- (b) to enter into trade connections with foreign countries by appointment of Trade Agents. The following zones have been selected:
 - (1) Trade Commissioner for the Middle East including Persia and Egypt.

- (2) Trade Commissioner for the Far East including Burma, Thailand and Japan.
- (3) Trade Commissioner for Australia, Indonesia and other neighbouring islands.
- (4) Trade Commissioner for United Kingdom and other European countries.
- (5) Trade Commissioner for America including U.S.A., Canada and South American countries.
- (c) to step up production of exportable food surpluses by laying particular stress on the development of small irrigation sources like wells and small tanks and also conservation and exploitation of fodder. A scheme to appoint Special Officers to tackle these problems is being considered.

10. **Currency Reserves.**—In order to carry out this programme, Mr. Laik Ali, advised by Mr. Ghulam Mohamed (Pakistan), has a clear-cut scheme to build reserve of sterling and hard currency in order to facilitate Hyderabad's imports from overseas. The accumulated reserves in London is about three millions and odd sterling. I understand it is negotiating with the Government of India, through the Reserve Bank of India, for conversion of the Government of India's securities held by it into sterling securities or gold. The Government of India, I understand, have informally agreed to this and, if this materializes, Hyderabad will have sufficient sterling at its disposal in U.K. It is proposed to negotiate for the gradual utilization of this reserve to meet Hyderabad's requirements in U.K. and its partial conversion into currencies to meet its requirements of imports from other foreign countries. Negotiations also are said to be afoot to negotiate with U.S.A. Government or Banks for a loan to meet its imports from U.S.A. Their Agent-General, presumably of London, has been carrying on negotiations with the Chase Bank of U.S.A. towards this. Ways and means of securing the membership of International Monetary Fund and of the World Bank are at present being considered by Moin Nawaz Jung.

11. **Ban on Indian Rupee.**—The ban on Indian Rupee is a part of the scheme to establish economic sovereignty. I have now obtained reliable information from records that the prohibition of the Indian Rupee is a clear touch of the arrangement as regards currency. I append the facts in Appendix 'B' which clearly show that there was definite arrangement since 1870, confirmed in 1909, when the Hyderabad Coinage Act was passed, under which the free circulation of the Indian Rupee was agreed not be prohibited or penalised.

12. I have put this economic aspect at great length because I found that Mr. Laik Ali, in all my discussions with him appeared to stress great emphasis on economic independence. It is highly essential that Hyderabad should not be given any favoured treatment in these matters; otherwise it will prove a danger both to the sovereignty and economic integrity of India.

APPENDIX VII

Appendix 'A' giving an appraisal of the Export & Import Position of Hyderabad.

1. Generally speaking Hyderabad is surplus in the following commodities to the extent of the quantities shown against each:

Foodgrains	0.50	lacs tons
Oil and Oil Seeds	3.50	" "
Cotton	3.40	" bales
Coal	4.50	" tons
Cement	1.30	" "
Paper	0.03	" "

The important commodities in which it is deficient and for which it depends upon imports either from the rest of India or from outside are the following:

Petrol	32	Lacs gallons
Kerosene	32	" "
Lubricating Oil	6.6	" "
Fuel and Crude Oil	13.25	" "
Salt	0.8	" tons
Gur	0.15	" "
Cloth	0.50	" bales (750 lacs yds.)

General consumer goods of the value of nearly 10 crores of Rupees. Machinery and Plants of the value of nearly 1.50 crores of Rupees. Raw materials for industries of the value of 2.50 crores of Rupees.

2. Hyderabad produces only about 1.5% and 1% respectively of rice and wheat production of India but about 20% of millets. It is surplus in millets and pulses and is deficit in rice and wheat. But with a little effort and by utilising the existing machinery of procurement, distribution and rationing it can be self-sufficient in the matter of food. In fact several Indian Provinces and States depend largely on Hyderabad for pulses. It is self-sufficient in sugar although its quota of consumption is lower than the rest of India. It is slightly deficit in *gur*. But it can manage with proper rationing arrangements. It is deficit in salt which is an important factor.

3. Oil Seeds.—Its groundnut production is about 7 lacs tons being 23% of total Indian production. In castor it almost holds a monopoly, its production being nearly 40,000 tons constituting 40% of total production of India. It also produces 45,000 tons of linseed being about 12% of total Indian produce.

4. Cotton.—It is surplus in cotton to the extent of 3.40 lacs bales. Its total production of cotton is about 5.50 lacs bales constituting 10% of the total Indian production of about 56 lacs bales. This is an important bargaining factor in as much as many of the

cotton mills in Sholapur, Ahmedabad and Bombay are being fed by Hyderabad. It will have large exportable surplus of cotton spare for the rest of India.

5. Coal.—This is the most important commodity in which Hyderabad is surplus. Its production is 10 lacs tons of which it exports about 4.5 lacs tons. Almost the whole of the requirements of M.S.M. Railway, S.I. Railway and Mysore Railway and the industries in South India are fed by its coal. This is of strategic importance and gives a hard bargaining factor in its hand. The total production of coal in India is 27 million tons (1939) and though Hyderabad's exports constitute about 2% of total Indian production, the Indian Provinces and States can ill afford to lose its exports of coal in view of the present scarcity of coal.

6. Cement.—This is another important commodity in which Hyderabad is surplus. Out of a total production of nearly 2 lacs tons, it retains only about a fourth and exports the balance. The total all India production of cement is 20 lacs tons and its surplus constitutes about 8% of it. This is another important bargaining factor in its hand.

7. The Sirpur Mills produce about 5,000 tons of paper of which a substantial quantity is exported. The total all India production is about 90,000 tons to which Hyderabad contributes about 6%.

8. Petrol and Other Mineral Oils.—This is a most important commodity of strategic importance in which Hyderabad is deficit, and dependent upon imports. But this involves more a question of transport than of supply from the rest of India. Hyderabad wants reciprocal arrangements with India for transport so that it can import these commodities from the overseas. The present stocks in Hyderabad are said to be sufficient for two or three months only. It is building up stocks for a longer period by providing necessary storage facilities to the importers. Hyderabad intends to build up stocks sufficient to meet the requirements for 3-4 months. (*Vide* intelligence reports from my office). The lubricating oils are also essential for running its railways and several industries. The stoppage of imports of these will hit Hyderabad transport very hard.

9. The salt imports consist of about 80,000 tons. The consumption can be reduced slightly. It is building up stocks which would last at least 6 months to a year.

10. Hyderabad has a small deficit in sugar and *gur*. The Government proposes to meet it by increasing sugarcane cultivation under the new irrigation projects.

11. Cloth.—Hyderabad is deficit in cloth. The Government has plans to increase the output of the existing mills and handloom cloth in order to attain long-range self-sufficiency. Its production consists of mill cloth 36 million yards and of handloom cloth 60 million yards i.e. a total of 96 million yards; but the yarn for most of the handloom cloth is provided by imports. The local mill cloth provides about 2½ yards per person and handloom cloth from local yarn another ¾ yard i.e. 3 yards per person. The outside mill cloth gives 4½ yards per person and handloom cloth from imported yarn another 2½ yards.

If Hyderabad does not receive any imports of cloth and yarn it shall have to cut down immediately its cloth consumption by 60%.

12. Other Consumer Goods.—Hyderabad depends upon imports for most of its consumer goods, particularly those imported from foreign countries. In this commodity also, it wants arrangement under which it can import directly. A scheme is being prepared to build up stocks of consumer goods and introduce strict rationing of the present stocks with the co-operation of the dealers.

13. Machinery and Plant and Raw Materials for Industries.—Hyderabad is dependent upon imports for all these commodities and unless reciprocal arrangement for transport is conceded, its industries can be throttled for want of spare parts, raw materials replacement etc. The recent purchase of spare parts on a large scale is intended to build up the necessary reserve of spare parts in order to tide over any short period of crisis. On the long-range basis, it is difficult to build up its industries without reciprocity of transport for these goods.

APPENDIX VIII

Letter dated March 23, 1948 from Rao Bahadur V. P. Menon, Secretary, Ministry of States, Government of India, to Mir Laik Ali, Prime Minister of Hyderabad.

I am desired to address you on the relations between the Government of India and H.E.H. the Nizam's Government.

2. The Government of India consider that a position has been reached in the discussions relating to the Standstill Agreement when definite and prompt steps have to be taken to prevent the relations between the two Governments as well as the security of the areas on both sides of the Hyderabad border from deteriorating further.

3. The Government of India have given the most careful consideration to the views which have been placed before them by you and other representatives on behalf of H.E.H's Government at the various discussions which have taken place since January, 1948. They have come to the conclusion that H.E.H's present Government have failed to carry out the obligations under the Standstill Agreement as hereinafter stated:

- (A) They have committed a breach of the existing agreements and arrangements relating to External Affairs—
 - (a) by giving a loan of twenty crores to a foreign power, to wit, the Pakistan Government;
 - (b) by appointing a Public Relations Officer in Pakistan (now re-called).
- (B) They have also failed to carry out their obligations relating to Defence, that is to say—
 - (a) by repudiating the obligations arising out of the Indian States Forces Scheme, 1939;
 - (b) by increasing the strength of the State Forces without the approval of the Government of India;
 - (c) by failing to forward an Annual Return in respect of the Police Forces;
 - (d) by supporting and taking assistance from the Razakars, a private army of Irregulars, functioning in collaboration with the Military and the Police of Hyderabad.
- (C) They have further committed a breach of the agreements and arrangements in respect of Communications by entering into an agreement with the United Press of America for setting up a transmitting and/or receiving station at Hyderabad without the concurrence of the Government of India.
- (D) They have further committed a breach of the agreements and arrangements as to other matters of common concern in the following respects:—

- (a) by making the use of Indian currency for cash transactions illegal in the State;
- (b) by banning the export of gold and groundnuts, and other oil seeds.

4. We have already brought these breaches to your notice in our discussions, but regret that so far they have not been set right.

5. H.E.H's Government will appreciate that as soon as the Standstill Agreement was executed the Government of India began to perform an essential part of the Standstill Agreement by withdrawing the Indian Army stationed at Bolarum. Practically the whole of it had been withdrawn by the end of February. The Government of India are also anxious to fulfil their other obligations. H.E.H's Government are aware that obligations under the Standstill Agreement are reciprocal. The Government of India therefore expect that H.E.H's Government will fully co-operate with them by forthwith taking action in order to fulfil their obligations under the Standstill Agreement in the following manner, that is to say:

- (a) by withdrawing twenty crores loan notes handed over to the Pakistan Government;
- (b) by agreeing to a Joint Commission being appointed to examine and determine the agreements and arrangements relating to matters of Defence;
- (c) by furnishing a Return of the strength, organisation and equipment of the Police in the form in which it used to be done prior to August 15, 1947;
- (d) by banning the organisation of Razakars;
- (e) by repealing the Ordinance making the use of Indian Currency for each transaction illegal in the State;
- (f) by cancelling the ban on the export of gold, groundnuts and other oil seeds; and
- (g) by cancelling the agreement, if any, with the United Press of America as regards the transmitting and/or receiving station for foreign news.

6. The peculiar position of Ittehad-ul-Mussalmeen in Hyderabad and of the Communists on the border causes the gravest concern to the Government of India. They consider that in the interests of peace inside the State and on both sides of the border the Ittehad-ul-Mussalmeen should be banned and its organisations wound up. If the activities of the Ittehad are not immediately stopped, it is apprehended that a very grave situation will develop involving the security not only of the Hyderabad State, but also of the adjoining Provinces of C.P., Bombay and Madras.

7. I am accordingly to request that H.E.H's Government will take prompt and definite steps to fulfil their obligations arising out of the Standstill Agreement and to ban the Ittehad as suggested. The Government of India will appreciate a very early reply indicating action which H.E.H. the Nizam's Government decides to take, or has taken, in respect of the various matters set out in this letter.

INDEX

- Abha, 106, 107
 Accession, Instrument of, 5, 6, 48, 49,
 54, 59, 136, 157
 Accession *Satyagraha*, 57-58
 Ahmed, Basheer, 143
 Ahmed, Sir Sultan, 32, 59, 60, 64, 65
 Ahmed, Zaheer, 175, 177, 200, 203
 Ahmedabad, 50, 75, 239
 Ahmednagar, 239
 A.I.C.C., 151
 Aiyar, Sir C. P. Ramaswami, 49, 50
 Akbar, 74
 Akhand Hindustan, 4
 Ala Hazrat, See Nizam
 Ali, Abdul Hasan Syed, 28, 229, 231, 243
 Ali, Akbar, 204
 Ali, Mir Laik, 7, 8, 9, 11, 24, 32, 33, 39,
 44, 53, 56, 74, 75, 76, 77, 78, 80, 81, 82,
 83, 84, 85, 93, 96, 97, 99, 100, 102, 103,
 104, 110, 111, 112, 113, 116, 119, 121,
 122, 123, 124, 125, 126, 134, 135, 136,
 137, 139, 140, 142, 144, 146, 147, 148,
 149, 160, 161, 162, 163, 165, 166, 167,
 168, 169, 170, 171, 172, 173, 174, 175,
 176, 177, 178, 179, 180, 181, 184, 186,
 187, 188, 189, 190, 191, 192, 193, 194,
 197, 198, 199, 200, 201, 202, 203, 204,
 206, 207, 208, 209, 211, 213, 214, 217,
 218, 219, 220, 221, 223, 225, 226, 227,
 228, 229, 230, 235, 244, 246, 260, his
 ministry, 66-72
 Ali, Mushtaq, 214
 Aligarh Muslim University, 28, 207
 All-India Radio, 84, 186
 Amin, M. P., 216
Amrita Bazar Patrika, 144
 Andhra, 7, 86, 92, 127, 156
 Andhra Mahasabha, 87, 88
 Aney, M. S., 23
 Ansari, Khwaza Moin-ud-Din, See
 Jung, Nawab Moin Nawaz
 Arabia, 75, 180
 Arabs, 150, 237, 240
 Army, H. Q., 214, 241
 Arya Samaj(ists), 4, 23, 24, 84, 100,
 179
 Asaf Jahi, 11, 22, 36, 98, 143, 163, 187,
 204, 231
 Asharfi, 12
 Assam, 201, 252
 Associated Press of India, 84, 97
 Atrafabalda, 128
 Attlee, Prime Minister, 61, 179
 Aurangabad, 56, 241
 Ayyangar, Raja Bahadur Aravamudu,
 33, 62, 63, 97, 116, 144, 145, 231
 Bangalore, 76, 157, 158, 159, 182, 187,
 200, 201, 244
 Bank of England, 210
 Bapu, See Gandhiji
 Bardoli Satyagraha, 2
 Bardoloi, Gopinath, 252
 Baroda, 30, 44, 45, 46, 47, 54, 198, 260
 Barsi, 182, 183
 Barsi Light Railway, 169
 Barton, Sir William, 15
 Begumpet, 179
 Bengal, 36, 118, 144, 148, 154, 221
 Berar, 30
 Berar, The Prince of, 13, 27, 28, 93,
 186, 197, 201, 225, 229, 230, 231, 244
 Bevan, Aneurin, 239
 Bezwada, 83, 87, 88, 92, 162
Bhagavad-Gita, the, 107, 110, 111, 120,
 210, 218, 219, 222, 223
 Bharatpur, 47
 Bharucha, 215
 Bhavan, Bharatiya Vidya, 199, 212, 216
 Bhopal, 43, 44, 46, 47
 Bhutto, Sir Shah Nawaz, 48
 Bibinagar, 76, 77
 Bidar, 83, 84, 129, 130, 150, 178, 191, 244
 Bikaner, 44, 46, 47, 54, 260
 Bindu, 85, 137
 Birla, G. D. 203

- Bismark, 44
 Bolarum, 5, 7, 8, 9, 61, 73, 104, 110, 125, 158, 173, 196, 199, 204, 226, 230, 249, Munshi's Life there, 116-120
 Bombay. 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 23, 47, 50, 67, 75, 76, 83, 85, 86, 87, 96, 100, 105, 115, 117, 124, 134, 138, 145, 151, 152, 159, 162, 178, 180, 182, 183, 184, 197, 198, 200, 210, 239, 245, 247, 248
 Bombay High Court, 5
 Bombay Legislative Council, 2
 Bombay Life Assurance Company, 7, 67
 British 1, 2, 19, 20, 21, 22, 24, 27, 31, 34, 35, 44, 45, 50, 52, 55, 60, 63, 87, 88, 89, 137, 153, 175, 176, 215, 216, 217, 235, 237, 240, 256, 257, 259
 Britter, 140, 143, 144
 Brown, Douglas, 211, 212, 215
 Buch, N. M., 197, 199, 207, 208, 212, 215, 216, 245
 Bucher, General, 165, 237, 239
 Bundi, 47

 Cabinet Mission, 30, 33
 Calcutta, 6, 127, 137
 Campbell-Johnson, Alan, 35, 53, 108, 125, 151, 165, visits Hyderabad, 157-164
 Canada, 115
 Cannanore, 89
 Ceded Districts, 144
 Central Provinces, 115, 117, 124, 134, 239
 Chandrachud, 198
 Chandy, 205
 Chaudhuri, Major General, 158, 228, 229, 230, 234, 240, 242, 244, 245
 Chhatari, The Nawab of, 30, 32, 33, 59, 61, 64, 69, 246, his delegation, 51-56, 59, 60, 62, 63, 64, 65
 Chhattisgarh, 50
 Chintamani, Sir C. Y., 23
 Chittagong, 115
 Chittod, 46
 Churchill, 153
 Circars, 36
 Cochin, 44
 Collateral Letters, See Standstill Agreement
 Commons, House of, 239
 Communist Crimes in Hyderabad, 128
 Communist Parties of China, Burma, Malaya and Indonesia, 127
 Communist Party of Great Britain, 87
 Communist Party of Hyderabad, 87, 127, 154
 Communist Party of India, 19, 27, 86, 87, 88, 89, 92, 127, 155
 Communists(m), 38, 58, 75, 77, 82, 83, 121, 127, 128, 129, 133, 134, 137, 138, 139, 153, 154, 155, 156, 164, 168, 172, 184, 185, 201, 207, 215, 239, 251, 252, 254, 261, on the move, 86-92
 Comrades' Association, 86
 Congress, Indian National, 4, 23, 30, 31, 35, 42, 43, 44, 45, 72, 75, 76, 80, 85, 86, 87, 88, 89, 90, 92, 105, 106, 133, 151, 198, 200, 204, 217, 225, 247, 257, 259
 Conservative Party, British, 33, 35, 61, 133
 Constituent Assembly, 1, 2, 4, 31, 33, 43, 44, 58, 69, 112, 252, 253
 Constitution of India, 127, 253, 255
 Corfield, Sir Conrad, 34, 43, 45
 Cotton, Sydney, 39, 150, 184, 202, 213, 214, 216
 C. P., See Central Provinces
 C. R., See Rajagopalachari
 Crown Representative, See Viceroy
 Czechoslovakia, 33, 75

Daily Express, 211
Daily Meezan, 154, 206, 209
Daily News, 148
Daily Telegraph, 211, 212
Dakshina Sadan, 73, 83, 93, 94, 95, 96, 99, 100, 102, 110, 114, 116, 119, 137, 159, 160, 181, 204, 215, 218, 219, 227, 228, 232, 243, 244, 247, 248
 Dar-us-Salam, 39, 140
 Deccan, 5, 20, 26, 37, 46, 61, 62, 68, 76, 78, 89, 112, 114, 121, 123, 133, 135, 140, 141, 155, 158, 159, 163, 176, 201, 254, 259, 261
 Deccan Airways, 75, 115
 Deccan Chronicle, 145

- Deccan House, See *Dakshina Sadan*
 Deendars, 22, 40, 41
 Defence of Hyderabad Regulations, 22
 Dehra Dun, 152, 170
 Delhi (New), 1, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 35, 36, 38, 47, 49, 50, 51, 54, 56, 59, 61, 62, 63, 64, 66, 67, 68, 71, 79, 84, 85, 103, 104, 108, 110, 115, 118, 119, 120, 123, 124, 126, 133, 137, 139, 140, 141, 142, 143, 144, 145, 146, 149, 151, 155, 156, 157, 158, 159, 160, 161, 162, 163, 165, 167, 168, 170, 171, 172, 173, 174, 175, 179, 180, 181, 188, 189, 190, 191, 197, 200, 201, 208, 214, 215, 216, 225, 227, 229, 230, 232, 235, 236, 238, 245, 247, 251, 259
 Desai, C. C., 4, 51, 104
 Desai, Morarji, 117, 159, 212
 Deval Devi, 119, 197, 205, 206, 207, 211, 213
 Dholpur, 47
 Dhoot, 151, 203, 208, 214
 Dungarpur, 47
 Durgadas, 200

 Eastern States, 50
 Eden, Sir Anthony, 239, 240
 Edwards, Rev. W. Le Cato, 184, 185, 203, 214, 238
 Egypt, 114, 180, 202
 El-Edroos, General, 33, 55, 62, 63, 75, 138, 161, 181, 182, 183, 184, 186, 191, 197, 198, 200, 201, 206, 211, 212, 220, 225, 228, 229, 230, 231, 234, 240
 England, 33, 61, 68, 69, 118, 133, 148, 157, 168, 176, 177, 183, 184, 200, 206, 212, 213, 238, 239

 Farouk, King, 216
 Federation, All-India, 21
 Free Press Journal, 145, 205, 206
 Fry, 214

 G., 206
 Gadgil, 107, 108
 Gaekwad, Sir Pratap Singh, 198, 199, 205
 Gaekwad, Sir Sayaji Rao, 198
 Gandhi, Devadas, 108, 110
 Gandhiji, 1, 2, 3, 6, 20, 30, 43, 46, 79, 80, 88, 90, 103, 104, 105, 110, 111, 114, 136, 148, 244, 251, 252, 258, the great martyrdom, 105-109
 Ganerwal, Laxminivas, 96, 120, 161, 198, 203, 204, 205, 206
 Gangapur, 182
 Ghosh, Sudhir, 6, 7
 Gita, See *Bhagavad-Gita*
 Goa, 32, 33, 75, 179, 226, 242
 Godavari, 92, 127
 Goddard, General, 158
 Gorta, 131, 132, 162
 Government of India Act, 1919, 19
 Government of India Act, 1935, 20, 21, 22
 Governor-General, 22, 23, 25, 52, 55, 59, 68, 123, 148, 157, 161, 189, 191, 215, 226, 230, 242, 256
 Graham, Colonel, 183, 184
 Gujarat, 118, 119
 Guntur, 92, 127
 Gupta, L. N., 7, 212
 Gwalior, 54
 Gyankumari, 197

 Habib, 207, 219, 220
 Hakimpeth Aerodrome, 9, 56
 Hamidi, Qamir, 213
 Hampi, 40
 Hasan, Prof. Hadi, 207, 209, 212
 Heda, Srimati Gyan Kumari, 110
 Hejaz, 202
 Herbert, 56
 Himmatsinhji, Major General, 124, 125
 Hindu, 84, 85, 97
 Hindu Civil Liberties Union, 23
 Hindu Mahasabha, 22, 140, 148
 Hindustan Times, 142, 144
 Hissamuddin, Mohammad, 143
 Hitler, 27
 Home Rule League, 49, 54, 217
 Husain, Imam, 54
 Hussain, Dildar, 98
 Hussein, 223
 Hydari, Sir Akbar, 21, 22, 23, 24, 25, 27, 187
 Hyderabad Construction Company, 24

- Hyderabad Gazette*, 22
Hyderabad in Retrospect, 26, 32, 49, 54, 56, 99-101, 188
 Hyderabad Residency, 5, 7, 8
Hyderabad's Relations with the Dominion of India, 56
 Hyderabad State Congress, 6, 7, 19, 22, 24, 28, 30, 31, 57, 58, 70, 77, 85, 86, 87, 89, 90, 91, 94, 97, 114, 125, 128, 137, 139, 144, 147, 154, 162, 184, 231
 Hyderabad Students' Association, 87

 Ibrahim, 241
 Imam, Sir Ali, 19
Imroze, 98, 204
 India, The Government of, 1, 4, 27, 37, 42, 48, 53, 54, 56, 58, 59, 61, 64, 65, 67, 68, 78, 79, 80, 81, 84, 90, 98, 112, 113, 115, 121, 122, 123, 126, 133, 134, 135, 136, 138, 140, 141, 145, 146, 151, 152, 153, 154, 156, 160, 161, 163, 164, 169, 171, 174, 180, 188, 190, 193, 195, 196, 202, 206, 207, 208, 215, 218, 225, 226, 231, 233, 235, 237, 238, 248, 250, 251
Indian Express, 145
 Indian Independence Act, (Bill) The, 33, 34, 52
Indian Nation, 32
 India's Agent-General, 4, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 18, 73, 80, 84, 100, 104, 114, 116, 118, 120, 123, 124, 139, 145, 146, 160, 227, 245, 247, 248, 249, 250
 Indore, 47
Integration of Indian States, The Story of the 33, 45, 47, 115
 International Court, 174
 Iraq, 75, 180
 Irwin, Lord, 25
 Ismail, Sir Mirza, 30, 31, 32, 33, 39, 88, 98, 157, 188, 189, 190, 191, 192, 200, 210, 211, 213, 226, 228, 231, 244
 Italia, 209
 Ittehad-ul-Mussulmeen, 5, 6, 8, 9, 10, 19, 20, 22, 24, 25, 26, 27, 28, 29, 31, 32, 37, 38, 39, 44, 55, 56, 57, 58, 63, 64, 65, 67, 68, 69, 70, 73, 74, 75, 76, 77, 78, 82, 87, 95, 97, 98, 99, 101, 114, 116, 119, 121, 122, 123, 130, 134, 135, 140, 144, 145, 148, 149, 152, 153, 154, 155, 160, 162, 165, 166, 168, 170, 171, 172, 174, 175, 177, 180, 181, 189, 190, 191, 192, 193, 204, 206, 209, 227, 229, 231, 235, 237, 241, 251
 Iyengar, 199, 200, 201, 205
 Iyengar, Sir N. Gopalaswami, 201, 202
 Iyer, Sir P. S. Sivaswami, 23

 Jagdish, 182
Jagir/s, Jagirdars, 16, 94
 Jah, Basalat, 197
 Jah, Muazzam, 13, 93, 186, 193, 197
 Jaipur, 30, 44, 45, 47, 260
 Jaisalmer, 46, 47
 Jalna, 70, 178
Janmabhoomi, 83
 Jayakar, 47
 Jhansi, 119
 Jinnah, 4, 15, 26, 33, 35, 43, 46, 54, 55, 68, 69, 81, 175, 200, 206, 217, 235, 238
 Jivraj, Dr., 107
 Jodhpur, 44, 46, 47, 260
 Joshi, 70, 71, 72, 74, 111, 178, 179, 201, 220
 Junagadh, 1, 48, 181
 Jung, Bahadur Yar, 19, 20, 22, 26, 27, 28, 70
 Jung, Manzur, 204
 Jung, Nawab Ali Yawar, 27, 32, 49, 54, 55, 56, 59, 60, 67, 99, 101, 188, 197, 205, 221
 Jung, Nawab Deen Yar, 33, 39, 94, 98, 99, 136, 148, 189, 191, 197, 198, 204, 205, 206, 208, 211, 213, 225, 226, 229, 231, 243
 Jung, Nawab Hosh Yar, 33, 94, 98, 99, 136, 157, 188, 189, 190
 Jung, Nawab Manzur, 98
 Jung, Nawab Moin Nawaz, 21, 32, 33, 39, 53, 55, 63, 65, 70, 74, 80, 81, 82, 93, 110, 113, 115, 121, 123, 126, 136, 148, 165, 168, 198, 200, 206, 213, 216, 229, 244, 260, leads delegation, 67, 68, 69
 Jung, Nawab Zain Yar, 165, 180, 189, 190, 191, 208, 231
 Jung, Sir Mehdi Yar, 16, 63, 69, 101

- Jung, Sir Salar, 14, 93
 Jung, Zul Qadar, 203, 204, 205, 208, 209, 213, 243

 Kafur, Malik, 119, 206
 Kamala Devi, 118
 Karachi, 68, 115, 179
 Karan, Raja Mehboob, 201, 225
 Kashmir, 1, 9, 39, 43, 47, 48, 135, 156, 201, 213, 235 236
 Kathiawad, 44, 47, 48, 50
 Khalifa, 24
 Khalji, Sultan Ala-ud-din, 118, 119, 215
 Khan Bahadur, See Jung, Bahadur Yar
 Khan, Liaquat Ali, 242
 Khan, Mahmud Nawaz, 19
 Khan, Sheobullah, 98, 204, 205, 206
 Khusrau, Sultan, 119, 206
 Khusru, Amir, 119
Kingdoms of Yesterday, 21, 34
 King Kothi, 11, 12, 13, 33, 62, 94, 96, 98, 136, 215, 227, 228, 230, 243, crisis, 188-194
 Kodada, 214, 215
 Kotah, 47
 Krishna, 92, 127
 Krishnamachari, Sir V. T., 45
 Krishnaswami, 196, 218, 220, 222
 Kumaon Regiment, 196, 219

 Labour Government, 44, 157, 179
 Lata, 212, 215
 Latur, 28
 Lawyers' Vigilance Committee, 131
Life, 211
Life and Work of Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel, 42, 43, 45
 London, 35, 68, 179, 180, 239
London Times, 140, 143, 144
 Lothian, Sir Arthur, 21, 34
 Lucknow, 119

 M--, 214
 Madhya Pradesh, See Central Provinces
 Madras, 7, 25, 36, 89, 92, 97, 103, 115, 117, 124, 127, 133, 134, 145, 147, 162, Majumdar, Dr. R. C., 6
 Makalla, 150
 Malabar, 89
 Malikarjunappa, 70, 178
 Maniben, 107
 Manu, 106, 107
 Mariappa, 158, 159
 Martin, Kingsley, 153
 Maulana Saheb, 107
 MAZ, 203, 204, 206, 208, 213
 Medak, 184, 185
Meezan, See *Daily Meezan*
 Melkote, 7, 85, 137
 Menon, V. P., 3, 4, 5, 33, 45, 47, 49, 50, 51, 61, 62, 78, 104, 105, 106, 115, 117, 121, 124, 125, 133, 134, 135, 139, 146, 165, 166, 169, 170, 206, 208, 209, 214, 216, 219, 245, 250
 Mirza, Sir, See Ismail
 Misra, D. P., 117
Mission with Mountbatten, 53, 151, 160
 Mitter, Sir B. L., 45
 Modi, Sohrab, 210
 Moghul Empire, 15, 256, 258, 260
 Moghuls, 15, 36
 Mohi-ud-Din, Mokhdum, 86, 153
 Monckton, Sir Walter, 5, 33, 34, 35, 51, 52, 53, 54, 55, 58, 59, 60, 61, 62, 64, 61, 68, 69, 78, 113, 123, 136, 142, 157, 168, 169, 170, 171, 173, 174, 175, 176, 187, 188, 202, 205, his formula, 146-150, 161
 Morarji, Desai, See Desai
 More, Lt. T. T., 240
 Mountbatten, Lord, 4, 5, 7, 8, 33, 34, 35, 45, 46, 49, 50, 51, 52, 53, 54, 55, 58, 59, 60, 61, 62, 63, 64, 67, 68, 72, 76, 78, 107, 123, 124, 125, 133, 139, 142, 147, 148, 151, 157, 160, 161, 163, 165, 166, 167, 168, 169, 170, 171, 172, 187, 188, 189, 191, 192, 193, 202, 206, 226, 236, leaves India, 173-180
 Mountbatten Plan, The, 33
 Mudaliar, Sir A. Ramaswami, 204, 212, 246
Mudra Rakshasa, 95
 Muhammad, Ghulam, 24, 75, 82
 Mulki Movement, 19, 20

- Munshi, K. M., is asked to go to Hyderabad 1-5, as Member of the Bombay Legislative Council, 2, as Home Minister of Bombay, 2, 4, 23, 100, in Yeravada Jail, 2, as Member of the Constituent Assembly, 2, 4, consultations in Delhi, 4-6, interviews in Bombay, 6, selecting staff, 6-9, as Chairman of the Bombay Life Assurance Company, 7, 66, accommodation problem, 7, 8, reception at Hyderabad. 9. 10, meets the Nizam, 11, 12, his part in formation of Rajasthan Union, 46-47, assesses the situation in Hyderabad 73-77, reception, 74, assesses his duties, 70-80, negotiates with Laik Ali and Moin Nawaz Jung, 80-82 difficult reporting, 82-85, like Sita in Ashoka Vana, 93-94, 211 breaking the ring-fence, 95-102, as Food Minister, 98, meets Laik Ali, 112-113, his life at Bolarum. 116. 120, writes to Laik Ali, 122-123, becomes *persona non grata*, 125, plot to remove him, 139-140, on trial, 142-145, explains position to A.I.C.C. and foreign journalists, 151-153, is plotted against 158-159, is ignored. 160-161, has the strangest talk with Laik Ali, 167-168, feels unhappy about concessions by Delhi, 172, bids farewell to Lord Mountbatten, 175-176, misses a heart-beat, 182, advises Laik Ali, 192-194, worried about staff safety, 195-197, anxieties and discussions, 198-203, feverish, 203, 208, 224, 225, 243, 245, prize offered for his disposal, 204, all-night thinking of Mummy, 205, alarm, 205, besieged, 219-221, life threatened, 222-224, advises Nizam, 228-230, broadcasts, 231-232, illness, 245-247, disappointments, 248-253, pulls the curtain down, 254-261
- Munshi, Srimati Lilavati, 116, 117, 197, 199, 205, 207, 211, 212, 213, 214, 215, 216, 218, 223, 244, 246, 249, 252
- Musi, 3, 8
- Muslim League, 4, 42, 43, 80, 237, 259
- Mussoorie, 158, 166
- My Public Life*, 30, 31, 32, 157
- Mysore, 30, 54, 158, 205, 239, 260
- Nagas, 201
- Naidu, Dr., 96, 116, 243, 244
- Naidu, Srimati Sarojini, 17, 96, 116
- Naldurg, 222, 225, 240
- Nalgonda, 27, 76, 83, 86, 87, 91, 92, 127, 128, 129, 164, 185, 254
- Nanaj, 183, 184
- Nanda, Major, 103, 199, 200, 201, 248
- Narayanrao, 84, 179
- Narendraji, Pandit, 200
- Nawanagar, Jamsaheb of, 44, 47, 50, 54
- Nazar-i-Bagh*, 12, 13
- Nazars*, 12, 16
- Nehru, Pandit Jawaharlal, 6, 30, 39, 43, 55, 58, 62, 78, 87, 89, 90, 106, 107, 109, 114, 116, 127, 128, 134, 135, 142, 144, 145, 146, 147, 148, 162, 166, 169, 170, 171, 174, 179, 181, 187, 188, 200, 214, 227, 232, 236, 242, 245, speaks, 151-156
- New Statesman and Nation*, 153
- Nizam, The 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11-18, 19, 21, 31, 32, 33, 34, 35, 36, 37, 38, 39, 40, 41, 44, 51, 52, 53, 55, 56, 57, 58, 59, 60, 61, 62, 63, 64, 73, 74, 76, 77, 78, 79, 81, 82, 83, 88, 90, 91, 93, 95, 96, 97, 98, 99, 100, 101, 102, 110, 111, 112, 114, 115, 116, 119, 121, 122, 125, 126, 128, 133, 134, 135, 137, 139, 140, 142, 143, 144, 146, 147, 148, 149, 151, 152, 153, 154, 155, 157, 159, 160, 161, 162, 163, 167, 168, 170, 171, 172, 173, 174, 175, 176, 178, 179, 180, 184, 186, 187, 189, 192, 193, 194, 197, 198, 200, 202, 203, 204, 205, 206, 207, 208, 209, 210, 211, 213, 214, 215, 216, 219, 220, 222, 225, 226, 227, 228, 233, 234, 236, 237, 238, 240, 241, 242, 243, 244, 246, 247, 249, 251, 254, 255, 256, 260, his stand, 1, playing for high stakes, 3, his family, fortunes and fads, 12-14, his political technique, 14-16, condition of his subjects, 16-18, his intrigues 33-35, his visions of a

- 'Third Dominion, 34-35 flirtations with Delhi, 58-64 submits to Razvi, 65, threatens to accede to Pakistan, 67, feels uneasy, 68, signs Standstill Agreement, 69, surrenders to the Ittehad, 69-70, his espionage system, 94-95, isolated, 136, realises position, 188, the storm breaks on his head, 189-191, he goes under, 191, is desolate, 228, befriends Munshi, 229, broadcasts to his people, 230-231, announces to the world, 246
 Nizamabad, 76, 77
Nizam's Gazette, 143
 Nizam's Subjects' League, 21
 North German Confederation, 44
 North India, 36, 76, 112

 Orissa, 7, 103, 196
 Osmanabad, 183
 Osmania University, 25, 26, 255
 Ottoman Empire, 15
 Oxford University, 206

 Pakistan, 15, 32, 33, 37, 39, 40, 42, 43, 46, 47, 48, 49, 60, 61, 63, 67, 68, 69, 72, 75, 80, 81, 82, 107, 115, 124, 134, 137, 150, 155, 156, 163, 174, 180, 181, 202, 209, 214, 216, 217, 235, 236, 238, 242, 251, 252, 259
 Pandit, Mrs. 216
 Panditji, See Nehru
 Panigiri, 184, 185
 Panikkar, Sardar K. M., 46
 Panna, 46, 47
 Pant, Pandit Govind Ballabh, 238
 Parbhani, 178
Parcham, 189
 Paris, 229
 Partition, 1, 42, 43, 80, 105, 237, 238
 Partiyal, 147
 Patel, Dr. Nathubhai D., 245
 Patel, H. M., 108, 199, 210, 245
 Patel, Sardar Vallabhbhai, 1, 2, 3, 4, 7, 35, 39, 51, 52, 53, 55, 58, 59, 61, 62, 65, 68, 69, 71, 73, 76, 79, 80, 93, 103, 104, 105, 106, 107, 108, 109, 110, 114, 115, 116, 117, 120, 121, 124, 125, 126, 128, 133, 134, 135, 136, 138, 139, 142, 145, 147, 151, 152, 153, 158, 160, 165, 166, 167, 168, 169, 170, 172, 177, 178, 181, 189, 194, 195, 196, 198, 199, 200, 203, 208, 209, 210, 212, 213, 214, 215, 216, 217, 218, 219, 236, 237, 238, 239, 242, 243, 244, 245, 248, 249, 250, 251, 252, 253, his chess board, 42-50, advises Razvi, 71-72
 Pathak, 205
 Pathans, 183
 Patiala, 44, 54
 Peacock Airborne Division, 75, 180, 217, 244
 P.E.P.S.U., 181
 Persian, 207
Picture Post, 205
Pioneer, 180
 Pittie, Pannalal, 96, 147, 151, 198, 205, 216, 229, 231, 243
 Pleaders' Protest Committee, 85, 215
 Police Action, 73, 78, 98, 117, 164, 220-261
 Poona, 159, 196, 200, 214, 216, 240
 Portugal, 33
 Potter, 211
 Prakasa, Sri, 242
 Prakasam, 89
 Prasada, Krishna, 245
 Pratap, Rana, 47
 Princes, Chamber of, 43, 44, 54
Prithvi Vallabh, 210
 Privy Council, 5
 Pyarelal, 107, 108

 Qible, Hazarat Maulana Siddiq Deendar Channa Basaweswar, 40, 41
 Quadri, Prof., 206

 Raghupati, 7, 8, 9, 103, 116
Rahbar, 22
 Rahim, Abdur, 29, 55, 63, 65, 67, 69, 70
 Rajagopalachari, 189, 191, 197, 201, 204, 205, 208, 210, 213, 215, 216, 226, 227, 230, 231, 242, 243
 Rajaji, See Rajagopalachari
 Rajasthan, 46, 260
 Rajendrasinhji, General, 200, 230, 240, 245
 Rajghat, 108
 Rajkot, 44, 199

- Raju, M. T., 7, 103, 199, 205, 209, 212, 216
- Ramachar, 22, 28, 70, 74, 76, 77, 85, 120, 151, 214, 229, 231, 243, 247
- Ramichand, Captain, 206
- Rampet, Raja of, 207
- Ramsingh, 216
- Randive, P. T., 90
- Rao, B. N., 212
- Rao, B. Ramakrishna, 22, 85, 120, 137, 144, 151, 247
- Rao, M. Ramachandra, 139
- Rao, Narsingh, 28
- Rao, N. K., 200, 207, 208
- Rao, Rama, 196, 220
- Rao, Sripat, 211
- Rashtrapati Nilayam. See Bolarum Residency.
- Rashtriya Swayam Sevak Sangh (R.S.S.), 123, 148
- Rasool, Ghulam, 23
- Ray, Sir P. C., 29
- Razakars, The, 1, 37, 38, 39, 40, 41, 57, 58, 59, 61, 64, 70, 72, 74, 75, 76, 77, 79, 80, 82, 83, 84, 85, 90, 91, 92, 93, 116, 117, 120, 121, 122, 123, 124, 125, 126, 127, 128, 129, 130, 133, 134, 135, 136, 140, 143, 144, 146, 147, 148, 150, 151, 152, 153, 154, 158, 159, 161, 162, 163, 164, 165, 167, 168, 169, 171, 180, 182, 183, 184, 185, 188, 189, 191, 192, 193, 195, 198, 201, 204, 207, 210, 211, 214, 215, 217, 218, 220, 221, 223, 225, 226, 228, 230, 232, 236, 237, 238, 239, 240, 241, 243, 244, 246, 251, 254, 255, 260, their tempo, 110-115
- Razvi, Kasim, 2, 5, 6, 8, 28, 29, 32, 33, 54, 55, 68, 70, 71, 73, 74, 83, 85, 93, 95, 97, 110, 114, 122, 125, 135, 136, 137, 140, 146, 147, 161, 162, 163, 167, 178, 183, 184, 187, 191, 192, 197, 201, 204, 206, 207, 208, 209, 217, 221, 225, 228, 233, 234, 240, 244, 246, 259, 261, his rise, 36-41, wins, 57-66 chooses delegation, 67, proposes Laik Ali as Prime Minister, 69, sees Sardar, 71-72, his mystery speech, 138-145. *Mujahid-e-Azam*, 148
- Reading, Lord, 14, 19
- Reddiar, O. P. Ramaswamy, 7, 117
- Reddy, Narayana, 86, 87, 153, 164
- Reddy, Pingle, Venkatarama, 7, 55, 62, 67, 68, 69, 70, 187, 198, 214
- Reddy, Pulla, 212
- Reddy, Ranga, 151
- Red Fort, 36, 163
- Resident, (British), 7, 14, 15, 34, 56, 73, 79, 85, 95, 208, 210, 256
- Rewa, 44
- Round Table Conferenccs 20
- Roy, Dr. Bidhan Chandra, 118
- R. S. M., 215
- Russia, 27, 87, 90
- Saggi, P. D., 42, 43, 45
- Salisbury, Lord, 240
- Sangam*, 110, 112
- Sanghs*, 88
- Sanjeevi, 200, 201
- Sankaranarayanan, 215
- Sarala, 199
- Sardar, See Patel, Sardar Vallabhbhai
- Sarf-i-Khas*, 12, 16, 26, 255
- Satyagraha*, 4, 20, 23, 24, 86, 89, 90
- Saurashtra, see Kathiawad
- Scott, Claude, 152, 213, 214
- Secunderabad, 5, 7, 9, 56, 58, 73, 74, 76, 81, 83, 85, 93, 103, 110, 119, 136, 210, 214, 226, 227, 228, 230, 232, 240, 243, 244, 248, 254
- Security Council, See United Nations Organisation
- Setalvad, Motilal, 212
- Shah, Bahadur, 233
- Shakuntala*, 207, 212, 213
- Shankar, 71
- Shastri, 97, 142, 143, 144, 209, 217
- Sheth, Amritlal, 83, 84
- Sholapur, 4, 23, 138, 159, 162, 182, 183, 239
- Shridharani, Dr., 144
- Siddiq, See Qible
- Singh, Brigadier, 183
- Singh, Major Randhir, 116, 196, 198, 199, 201, 206, 216, 217, 219, 220, 221, 223, 227, 248, 249
- Singh, Sardar Baldeo, 108, 158
- Singh Bahadur, Sir Bhupal, 46
- Sinha, Satyanarayan, 203
- Sita Devi, 198

- Socialists, 127
 South-East Asian Youth Conference, 127
 Stalin, 89
 Standstill Agreement, 1, 4, 9, 48, 49, 62, 63, 64, 66, 67, 68, 69, 74, 75, 78, 79, 81, 110, 111, 113, 115, 121, 124, 125, 128, 129, 134, 136, 146, 147, 155, 172, 174, 176, 202, 203, 215
 States Forces Scheme, 121, 146, 149, 169
 States Ministry, 4, 6, 7, 45, 50, 80, 106, 123, 124, 135, 139, 146, 162, 186, 197, 199, 201, 205, 207, 214, 229, 238, 248, 249, 250
 States Peoples' Conference, 30
Subah-e-Deccan, 27
 Sukhtankar, Dr. 245
 Sundar, Sham, 143

 Taleyarkhan, Homi, 83
Taluq, Taluqdar, 16
 Tanjore, 89
 Taqi-ud-Din, Syed, 29, 32, 39
 Tasker, Sir Theodore, 16
 Tata Sons Ltd., 115
 Tatachari, 215
 Telcngana, 92, 137
Time, 211
Times of India, 152
 Tirtha, Swami Ramananda, 7, 57, 70, 74, 85, 90, 125, 168, 225, 231, 233, 243, 245, 247
 Trans-jordan, 202
 Travancore, 49
 Trimulgherry, 118
 Tughlaks, 119
 Turkey, 15

 Udaipur, 44, 46, 47, 260
 Udgir, 206
 Ukraine, 90
 United Front, 90-92, 128
 United Kingdom, 34, 44, 55, 56, 58, 61, 69, 115, 127, 137, 152, 186
 United Nations Organization, 90, 133, 174, 180, 188, 190, 200, 201, 202, 203, 204, 208, 210, 212, 213, 216, 229, 231, 233, 234, 244, 246
 United Press of America, 134
 United Press of India, 84, 97
 United States of America, 56, 58, 115, 127, 137, 180
 Uttar Pradesh, 96, 238

 Vanaparty, Raja of, 94, 201, 206, 212
Vande Mataram, 25, 26
 Venkatachar, C. S., 46
 Venkatarao, 70, 97, 130, 142, 143, 162
 Venkatavardhan, 103, 209, 216, 248
 Viceroy, 14, 25, 49, 50
 Vijayanagar, 40
 Vijayawada, See Bezwada
 Vinayakrao, 214
 V. P., See Menon

 W—, 197, 198, 201, 207, 211, 216
 Waghray, Colonel, 95, 96
 Warangal, 76, 83, 86, 87, 91, 92, 127, 129, 161, 164, 254
 'Weapons Week', 140, 143
 Wellesley, Lord, 119
 Weston, Lt.-Col., 183
 Whitekar, Bishop, 202
 'White Man's Burden', 34
White Paper on Hyderabad, 14, 134
 Willingdon, Lord, 13
 Windsor, Duke of, 5
 Windsor Place, 4

 Y—, 216
 Young, Desmond, 180, 213

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